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THE

# SATURDAY REVIEW

OF

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The SATURDAY REVIEW will publish next week the fourth of the series of "Sketches from the Front", by a Sergeant in Kitchener's.

### NOTES OF THE WEEK.

It is now four weeks since the German armies began to batter at the French lines before Verdun. These weeks have thoroughly justified the confidence of the French in their defences. The English public has passed, during this period of strain, from a too vivid anxiety into a too vivid reaction. There was never any reason to doubt that the French armies could hold up the Germans stubbornly and effectively, and exact from them a fearful toll of casualties for every rood of yielded land. There has never been a need for great alarm or loud exclamation. The military event has followed its natural and probable course. The Germans hold a few additional square miles of the soil of France, for which they have paid a terribly excessive price in men and material. If this is to be the rate and nature of their progress towards Paris we must hope they will continue to make it. The splendid French armies have lost no point of the awful game. There have been times when they were sick with the slaughtering of German soldiers.

The too vivid anxiety of many people in England during the first days of the grand assault was not at all warranted. But now, like all unstable emotions, it threatens to pass into the other extreme. We hear now upon all sides that, because the Germans have failed to break through at Verdun, the war will soon be over and finished. Germany has thrown her final die, and the cast has been against her. A complete victory of the Allies must shortly follow—due to take place, say, in the early summer. This sort of talk is like the Weaver's dream: it hath no bottom. We have to be ready, not for an easy victory some time in the early summer, but for a long and arduous war, which may last, not for weeks and months, but for a period which runs into years.

Why should we expect that Germany will be ready for peace the moment she realises that she cannot beat her way into Paris? Why should we expect, so long as she can sullenly hold Belgium and Poland, keeping at bay our armies and selling dearly her conquered acres, that Germany will be ready to make terms? It is not wise or politic to imagine anything of the kind. Will she not rather organise her defences as she has organised her advances—trusting to wear us down by tenacity and hard endurance? Our present business is to fix our minds firmly to the necessity before us of a hard, tough struggle with a Government which has everything to lose and nothing to gain by a peace concluded—as the supposition is—immediately on the top of a signal failure. Germany will not make peace because Verdun is proving a harder job than she anticipated. Germany will not make peace till we can force her to do so; and that date is not yet within the sight of anyone.

The Verdun battle goes on, but there seems to be less heart now in most of the German attacks. Those between Vaux and Dambloup and between Vaux and the woods south of Haudromont Farm were thrown back with ease; it is only across the Meuse, on their right flank, that the Germans reveal any of the old confidence. Here they are unwilling to admit their defeat; and at a sacrifice that helps the French plans they have pushed their way, aided by liquid fire, to and through the wood of Avocourt, hard by the village of Avocourt. Then on Wednesday, after a violent bombardment lasting all day, they made several attacks on the French front comprised between the horn of Avocourt wood and the village of Malancourt. All their attempts to debouch from the wood were futile, but "the enemy", says the French official report, "gained a footing on the knoll of Haucourt, about a kilometre south-west of Malancourt".

Meantime it would seem that the British are relieving the French of an important section of their line.

We hear of British troops in the part of the line near Artois. The British line apparently runs from the north of Ypres to Frise. This would explain General Joffre's answer this week to the complimentary telegram of General Haig, in which he referred to the way in which the British Army had answered the call upon them by their French comrades.

The Russians have begun to make pressing attacks along their front from the Gulf of Riga to about seventy miles south of Dvinsk. Gas and asphyxiating shells are being used by both sides. Near the village of Plakanen, and in the district south of Dahlen Island, brisk fighting has tested the enemy's outposts, while in the Jacobstadt sector the Russians have taken a village and wood east of Augustinhof, as well as a wood between the forest district of Dukerneck and the village of Delvipect in the Bushhof region. South of Dvinsk there is promise of much more to come, and our Allies have begun to collect prisoners.

German official reports contradict the Russian *communiqués*, and show anxiety in boastful claims which need confirmation; but they admit that the Russian movement has extended into a "great offensive". While the snow falls in London, Russia gets into her stride for the spring campaign, which seems destined to put out of gear the reinforcement plans of Germany. The present activity on her European front, along the northern and north-western sectors, and in Galicia, will prevent the transfer of German and Austrian troops to Verdun and the western lines. According to the Petrograd correspondent of the "Morning Post", the really great move on the Russian front has begun with troops that have been thoroughly trained.

The Russians, after a fight, have occupied the city of Ispahan, greatly to the joy of the population, who have suffered exceedingly from Germans and their mercenaries. Looting and other devilries had caused the Persian Governor-General and his staff to seek refuge with the Russians, and they accompanied the Russian troops to Ispahan.

A week ago, 18 March, the Prince of Wales arrived at Ismailia to take up his new work as staff captain on the Staff of the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, The Mediterranean Expeditionary Force. The Prince has been very busy since the war began. In November 1914, after three months of experience as second lieutenant in the Grenadier Guards, he went to France to join the Staff of Sir John French. A month later his promotion to lieutenant was gazetted, and his rapid progress was noted everywhere at the front. There has been no attempt to set the Prince apart from other officers of his age, nor has there been any other interference with his wish to earn his training quietly and thoroughly.

On 14 March an armoured-car squadron in Western Egypt, under the Duke of Westminster, chivied the Arabs over the Tripoli frontier, rescuing 91 prisoners, capturing all their guns and machine-guns, and bringing to end the campaign against the Senussi. This seems to have been quite a brilliant affair. It was undoubtedly a complete success, well planned and dashing executed.

Four German seaplanes flew over East Kent last Sunday, operating in pairs. One pair appeared over Dover between 1 and 2 o'clock, and one of this pair visited Deal. The other couple soon after 2 o'clock made an attack on Ramsgate, then separated in order to pass on to Margate and Westgate. Eleven civilians were killed, including seven children; twenty-nine were wounded, including five women, seven children. British airmen went up at once, and Flight-Commander Bone, R.N.A.S., in a single-seater aeroplane, pursued one of the German seaplanes 30 miles out to sea, where after an action lasting a quarter of an

hour he brought his foe down. The German machine was hit many times and the observer killed.

The greatest air raid of the war was carried out with success last Monday, when an Allied fleet of sixty-five aeroplanes dropped more than four tons of explosives on the German seaplane station of Zeebrugge and the aerodrome at Houttave, near Zeebrugge. About 200 lbs. of bombs was carried by each machine. A Belgian airman was seriously wounded, but returned home with the other brave men. It is believed that considerable damage was done.

On Tuesday morning there was a skirmish in the North Sea. Four British destroyers sighted three German destroyers off the Belgian coast. At once the enemy boats turned and ran for Zeebrugge, chased by our destroyers. Shots were exchanged and two of the German boats were hit. Our casualties were four men wounded. The Berlin account of this meeting is as mendacious as their usual seafaring yarns.

Our soldiers at the Dardanelles were unanimous concerning the chivalry of the Turk. The Turk is a clean fighter, soldierly and straight in his methods, and our own men have often openly regretted that the political misleading of the Turkish nation by the treacherous and selfish politicians thrown up by the late revolution should have made him our enemy. But regret cannot mend the position. All we can do is to express our sense of the difference between the Turk and his Prussian master. It is well to recognise that in one corner of the theatre of war our soldiers have met an enemy they can respect. A fresh proof of this has just come to hand in a despatch from Mr. Candler, in Mesopotamia.

Mr. Candler writes: "Without being led into an unconsidered eulogy of the Turk, who has his faults like everybody else, I think that it will be allowed that he has a cleaner record in this campaign than our enemies elsewhere. In courtesy and chivalry, of course, he is immeasurably superior to the Hun, and he has the reputation of treating his prisoners well. When two of our airmen fell into the Turks' hands some time ago the Turkish General Nur-ed-Din sent an Arab into our camp at their request asking us to send over their kits. The Political handed over the men's belongings and some money for purchases, but the prisoners had gone north when the messenger arrived, whereupon Nur-ed-Din sent the kit and the money back with his regrets and a courteous message that the airmen were his guests and would be in no need." Mr. Candler also describes how the Turkish General Saif Ullah offered a reward to the Arabs for every prisoner brought in. The object of the General was to make it more profitable for thieving Arab banditti to bring in the wounded as prisoners of war than secretly to pilfer and possibly murder them.

Mr. Hughes has added this week to his list of speeches—notably on Monday at the City Carlton, where he most urgently called for an immediate declaration of our trade policy. Unless we declare our policy of defence against German economic penetration and conquest *now while the war is in progress*, says Mr. Hughes, we shall find it impossible to act at all effectively or thoroughly. He tells us he has found already "many influences at work" to prevent the adoption of a thorough policy. He warns us that such a policy implies a swift change from our old kindly habits. If we are to act as the Australian Government has acted in breaking the commercial power of Germany in Australia he declares that we shall have to learn "much resolution and a callous disregard of very many things". Our whole system is honeycombed with German and Austrian financial interests, which will again be actively directed as political interests when the war is finished.

Great Britain's voluntary blockade of her own ports is shortly to be tightened up. Mr. Runciman has told the Associated Press that the following new articles are under the ban: motor-cars, musical instruments, cutlery, hardware, yarns, chinaware, fancy goods, and soap. Shortage of ships is the sole reason given. Is it not time the Government explained to us this policy of prohibition? Why do they consider it a better policy than a general tariff? Would not a general tariff tend to reduce tonnage in a far more level, smooth, and less dangerous way than this wholesale execution of chosen industries? No defence or explanation has yet been made of the gravest industrial decision yet arrived at in the course of the war. All we can gather from the new Order in Council, soon to be issued, is that for the moment, apparently, the Government is not considering the question of a tariff. It prefers the method of total prohibition of certain articles to a scientific levy upon imports generally.

Lord Hardinge has announced this week that the system of Indentured Indian Labour is to be abolished. It is a system which goes back over thirty years, and a system against which there has lately been a strong agitation throughout India. Lord Hardinge deals with its history and results in severe terms. The system, far from having any evil intention, was the natural product of a necessary effort to provide for the emigration of Indian labour. Indenture was necessary to protect the Indians in their new life—so clearly necessary that the worst results of the system only appear when the Indians, on the expiration of their contracts, become technically free. The position of these "free" Indians—there were 10,000 of them in Natal in 1910—has been a hard problem for the South African Government, and will not easily be settled. Many questions have yet to be solved in respect of them. Meantime the Government has decided not to add to the dimensions of the problem by continuing the system out of which it has arisen.

For seven or eight weeks there has been much private anxiety in many circles about the condition of hospital work in Mesopotamia, and we are glad that the matter has passed from gossip and an occasional reference in the Press to a very stern official statement by Mr. Chamberlain. "I have to admit", says Mr. Chamberlain, "that in my opinion there has been a lamentable breakdown of the hospital arrangements. I will not try to palliate some of the things which I have learnt have taken place there, but this campaign has been carried on under circumstances of very great difficulty". For instance, the campaign grew until it overstrained the resources of the Indian Army. To-day we rejoice to know the ultimate control is exercised by the Imperial General Staff in London, instead of by officialism in India.

But when all allowances have been made for the pressure and the tangle of difficulties, the outstanding fact is that the hospital arrangements were bad. Who is to be blamed? Mr. Chamberlain understands hospital supplies of all sorts have been plentiful enough at Basra, but he believes there has been a deficiency—"grave and inexcusable"—of medical supplies above Basra, arising in large part from the difficulties of river transport. "But these difficulties do not account for all that has happened", "and a thorough inquiry is proceeding in the matter". We assume that the person or persons responsible for the inexcusable part of the blundering will be punished without the smallest mercy.

Mr. Billing has not yet brought into the House the bombs which he undertook last week to lay upon the Table. But he certainly brought into the House on Wednesday high explosives of another sort. The word "murder" has been not infrequently heard at Westminster. It is not so terrible a word as might be imagined. But surely it is hardly politic to talk of murder as Mr. Billing has done. It is not likely to

put much heart into our gallant airmen to hear that it is murder to send them up in machines provided by the Government. Besides, is it altogether true? Flight-Commander Bone tells us rather a different story; and we occasionally hear from the Front accounts of our air service which hardly bear out Mr. Billing's assertion that our British aeroplanes are fodder for Fokkers.

Mr. Billing mismanaged his case on Wednesday, and rather badly damaged his early favour with the House. Mr. Ellis Griffith's criticism was more effective; but neither of them drew from the Government anything that was either definite or new, saving only a just and necessary assertion from Mr. Tennant of the personal competence of Sir David Henderson. The public should turn from this debate, for comfort and reassurance, to a speech made by Lord Montagu on the same day to the Liberal War Committee. Lord Montagu is fully alive to the claims of the air service; and he assures us that the Joint Committee on which he is now serving is the natural prelude to a full development of our fourth arm under a Board of Aviation. Lord Montagu is not satisfied. He asks for more courage in experiment, for more "vision". Nevertheless, he says we must for a while be patient.

The Government has scored heavily at Market Harborough, and the moral of this event is fairly clear. Mr. Billing got into Parliament against the Coalition on a definite issue. He scored because he expressed a public discontent with the Government's handling of a specific question. Mr. Bowles had no such clear policy to go upon. He stood simply against the Coalition. His rejection by 4,000 odd votes means that general discontent is of no use as an election cry. Electors require a policy to vote for as well as a policy to vote against.

Mr. Hayes Fisher, in explaining to the House of Commons the Naval and Military War Pensions Bill, gave figures to show that no fewer than 46,000 widows are now—or will be soon—on State pay. 41,500 married men, non-commissioned officers and privates, have lost their lives, and the "Naval widows" number 4,648. 27,286 widows are receiving pensions—10s. a week each, with corresponding additions according to the number of the family. Thus, a widow with two children gets 18s. 6d.

We referred last week, in an article entitled "The Missing 'Peccavi'", to Lord Salisbury's "Noble Army of Confessors". A correspondent reminds us that this noble army, which closed with Lord Ribblesdale, began, not with Rousseau, but with St. Augustine.

The visit of General Cadorna to England is a welcome opportunity to express our sense of the valuable and effective co-operation of Italy in the war. Italy's difficulties in the war have been great; and all who know anything of the work Italy has done have followed her career with admiration. To undervalue it is sheer ignorance, as will hereafter be more clearly shown. General Cadorna's visit expresses the recent tendency of the Allies to co-ordinate their strategy more closely upon every side.

#### TO OUR READERS.

The restriction in the import of paper and the scarcity that will result may make it necessary for the SATURDAY REVIEW to curtail the surplus copies ordered by the trade to meet the casual demands.

We hope, therefore, that readers of the SATURDAY REVIEW will assist in this economy of paper by giving their newsagent a definite order, or by forwarding a subscription direct to the office, 10 King Street, Covent Garden, London.

Without this precaution some difficulty may be experienced in obtaining the REVIEW.

## LEADING ARTICLES.

## THE NEED OF STABLE VIEWS.

IT is said once more that a sudden and complete breakdown of German tenacity, both civilian and military, will end the war by a given date. This notion has come and has gone four or five times; it was very active during last autumn, when Christmas was the time chosen for the collapse of Germany; and now, arising quite fresh after past defeats, it looks forward to July as the latest month in which the Entente Allies will impose their terms after a conclusive victory. Many persons expect the war to be over as early as the middle of May. They cannot explain why it should end then, and they seem unconscious of the fact that their guessing talk is at standing odds with Lord Kitchener's urgent demand for new recruits.

If the war cannot be ended by the middle of May, nor by the end of July, no false prophet will hesitate to choose another date, and, sooner or later, he will hit upon the right one and shout: "Ah! Didn't I tell you so?" A comedy of prophecy at the present time is not a thing to be applauded, as it draws public attention from the stern fighting to be done, and causes a great many persons to forget that the French, who have experienced for twenty months what a ravaging invasion means to every man, woman, and child, make no guesses as to when peace will come, but go on fighting as a people in order to pass from Verdun into an offensive which may last a year, perhaps longer.

Never was there a time less fitted for random guesses and unstable views. Verdun has proved not merely that the French defence is iron hard, but that the German energy of attack has culminated, leaving us all free to consider with cool judgment a new set of problems. We have to consider what is likely to happen when the German offensive dwindles into mere defensive warfare, into an effort to retain what it has conquered. Perhaps this moment may come soon, for if the Germans continue their Verdun methods, perilous and costly in tactics, they will squander their reserves and cripple their power of defence. They may go further yet at Verdun. They cannot break off their attack at once; public opinion in Germany, buoyed up by inflated hopes, has to be humoured, let down as cautiously as possible; but we may shortly expect a change of policy from the gradual suicide of army corps in a purchasing of further positions.

Meantime, while the French from day to day act with magnificent skill and tact the part that General Joffre has planned for them, General Haig's forces grow stronger and stronger, like the sea-pressure of the British Navy. At the right moment the Entente Allies will strike, and strike together, and soon everyone will know what the Austro-Germans can do against a real offensive pressing along all the battle-lines. Those who believe that Germany will give in after a brief resistance forget that she has nothing whatever to gain by accepting the known punishment of a thorough peace rather than try to earn by stubborn defence a secure foothold for bargaining. Already her finances are in such disorder that nothing less than a stalemate can be of any use to them. How could they be helped by an early peace, with heavy indemnities to wronged and ravaged countries? And does anyone really believe, after serious thought, that Germany, rather than lose more lives, will seek in a retributive peace what she fears most of all, and what is most essential to the security of Europe—adequate checks on her military preparations in the years to come?

Her statesmen cannot be blind to the fact that Germany is a criminal outlaw, and that the Entente Allies have pledged themselves not once, but several times, to "smash" her military despotism. If the Germans do not understand that "smashing" includes effective checks on their future armaments, and also on their plots and plans in trade, they must have lost in war the foresight which they have shown per-

sistently since 1864. There is no sign of this yet, so we cannot reasonably assume that Germany will sue for peace rather than try in a long defence to clutch some bargaining advantage from the uncertainties of fighting.

She will talk about peace, no doubt; she has talked about it for months, partly by inspiring gossip in neutral countries, partly by other means that she looks upon as clever and insidious. Many international financiers do not wish to see her defeated and punished; she appeals to them, as well as to the weak and sentimental, when she asks the world to be as incautious towards her present peace tactics as it was towards her old "peaceful" penetration.

After considering these matters we cannot understand why reflective persons in England should chatter prophecies about peace when they ought to consider what the public attitude should be to a German defensive. Gusts of panic over 17-in. guns, and a feverish earnestness over small advances and short retreats have had their day and should go, never to return. How loud was the hullabaloo which on two occasions drew attention to a seriously imperilled Egypt and a threatened India. After the Serbian campaign Germany, with her Allies, Bulgarian, Turkish, and Austro-Hungarian, was going to do marvels beyond Constantinople—very far beyond; but the Grand Duke Nicholas intervened with a conquering surprise, and the marvels were achieved by his troops. Then Germany struck hard at Verdun, after hoaxing the forces around Salonika and the army in Egypt.

Is it overmuch to expect that cool and stable views will soon be much commoner than they have been among a great many persons in this country? From the beginning Lord Kitchener has foreseen a three years' war. He is as urgent as ever in his demand for men; neither he nor General Joffre has encouraged the Entente Allies to look forward to a swift crumpling-up of Germany. And this is not all. It is debilitating to talk about peace when no cue has come from General Joffre or from the British and French Governments. When the German power has reached its breaking-point there will be evidence enough of the fact: there is no such evidence now visible anywhere. And if Germany has made up her mind to wage a defensive war to the bitterest possible end, she may occupy in resistance as much time as she has put into her offensive. If so, Lord Kitchener's forecast will be wrong on the right side: the war will be one of forty months, not one of three years. But in either case the strain must be borne coolly and confidently. Checks here and there, common ups and downs of fortune, will attend the Allied advance, and fussy, excitable persons will hark back again and again to their unstable views, hailing every goal for their own side as a test match won, and bemoaning every goal against them as an evil portent.

It has been noticed that unstable views—known as grouching and tall stories—are unknown in the tight corners, where everyone is far too occupied to be either too anxious or too elated over the hazards of war; while grouchers and "gassers" do appear in rest camps and at the base. Similarly, French civilians understand the war and its needs better than our own people, being, as a rule, close to its danger zones, and much more concerned at first-hand with the daily havoc done by bombardments. Little is left to their imagination; they see from day to day the actual saving of their native land, and custom reconciles them to the cruel vicissitudes of their lot. If their wages were unusually high, and if statesmen talked to them about their prosperity in war, can anyone suppose that they would be as dour and as dogged as they are? But unstable views in England, though easy to explain, ought not to be passed over as natural, inevitable, because they keep energy out of focus and play into the unscrupulous hands of half-fighters and stop-the-war zealots.

## MR. ASQUITH AND COMPULSION.

THE "Times" is now strongly, and almost from day to day, pressing for the second and final instalment of obligatory military service; and the movement—which is also being urged by considerable numbers of the attested married men—is fraught with such importance in several ways that we must say a few words about it at once. The SATURDAY REVIEW, as our readers know, urged week after week and month after month soon after the war started and the real voluntary spirit died down, that the Government should bring in forthwith a fair and general measure of obligatory military service for all men of fit bodies and age. But it was not to be; and for at least six months in 1914 and 1915 we could discover virtually no supporters—at least they were as rare and precious in those days as manna from on high. As a result, of course, the country has suffered terribly in men, in money, in munitions, in trade; and also as a result we have the present disgusting and humiliating wrangle between the attested and the unattested, between the job losers and the job-pickers, as well as between the married and the single men. Of all the blunders and defects at home in the conduct of the war which stand to our national discredit, that blunder of putting off—of miserably putting off—the inevitable and elementary step of a great land war was the worst. The cowardice and the folly of it can never be forgotten or overlooked.

But to-day the question is: Ought we at once to complete the great and absolutely essential reform which the Military Service Act has established; or shall we wait a little till the actual pledge to the married attested men *v.* the single men is carried out in spirit and letter, and the present revolting wrangle closed—as it must and will be—and then have Military Service Act number two? Our instinct is that it would be wiser, on the whole, to clear up the present mess about the pledge; get the exemption evil sharply remedied; and then complete the great reform. That, on the whole, is our instinct—an instinct founded on experience of practical politics. Clear up the present mess over the pledge and exemptions, let the outcry die out, and then round off the good work of national service and rescue the rest of the young and serviceable men from degradation and disgrace.

However, we admit it is quite an open question as to whether the step should be taken at once or a little later, when the authorities again insist that they must have more men, for enough men are not yet forthcoming. But there is a consequence of the step if taken now—or, indeed, whenever it is taken—which the country ought to face squarely. It is better to be frank over this personal Ministerial question: Mr. Asquith will, we believe, cease to be Prime Minister when the second half of the Military Service measure is decided on and brought in. He will not go further in the direction of compulsion than he has gone, and has let this be understood. Thus directly the Military Service Bill (II.) is decided on, another leader will have to be chosen; and this is, obviously, a matter of very great importance. There are, we know, a good many who want to see Mr. Lloyd George take Mr. Asquith's place. But there are a good many who—rightly in our view—mean to have nothing of the kind. They freely bear witness to his great activity, to his nimble and persuasive oratory, and to his patriotism: but they recognise that he is not at all a good man of business, that he is volatile and heady, and that he is distressingly subject to Celtic emotionism, and to—often—false sentiment. In short, they are quite determined not to have Mr. Lloyd George as leader of the country, however often he may lead the House.

Suppose, then, the final instalment of compulsion is brought in shortly, the country will have to make up its mind whom it wants for leader; and it will have to leave Mr. Lloyd George out of the reckoning unless it desiderates a real smashing of national unity.

## WHAT IS OUR IMPERIAL POLICY?

BY one of the happiest political chances the war has hitherto yielded—as happy as that first and greatest chance which ordained that Lord Kitchener should be in London and at the instant service of the late Government in August 1914—there happens to be with us to-day a man who is speaking bravely and clearly to the British nation upon a subject as to which high political opinion is notoriously divided and uncertain. It is a long time since we heard from a British platform such speeches as now we are hearing from Mr. Hughes. There is a ring to them—a ring of flawless sincerity and intense conviction, a driving simplicity and absence of reserve or qualification which has lately become strange to our political life. They are the speeches of a man unhampered by compromises with political "necessity". Mr. Hughes speaks plainly as to the things which he feels and believes to be essential. There is no need for us to read between the lines of his speeches. All he desires to say is explicitly said in the speeches themselves. He proclaims openly what is at the back of the minds of some of our leaders to-day, and what, we believe, is assuredly at the back of the minds of the majority of thinking people in the country. The secret of his effect upon the public—undoubtedly a very strong and a very real effect—lies partly, it is true, in the authority with which he speaks as the accredited representative of the Dominions. But it lies also in his being in the best sense an outsider, a man who comes into our political life with a fresh, broad outlook, a man to whom many things we are in the habit of regarding as extremely important are not really important at all. Mr. Hughes speaks as an envoy of three Dominions. He is expressing to us the mind and spirit of Australia, New Zealand, and Canada. He comes to claim for the Dominions a reasonable share in the future of the Empire—to make us sensible of the revolution which the war has made in our conception of the Empire as a fighting unit. This lends to his speeches a high significance, and gives to their peculiar driving power and unmistakable straightness of direction an added appeal. Mr. Hughes holds up to us in England to-day a mirror in which we may see ourselves as others see us—these "others" being the people of the Dominions who have so swiftly and loyally shown themselves to be at one with us in time of need.

We touch here upon the main message and belief of the Australian Premier. Through all he has said hitherto is threaded a resolution that, so far as he is entitled to speak for the Dominions, the Dominions shall henceforth be of one race and one political destiny. The Empire must henceforth think and act as a whole. We must organise ourselves politically and industrially to that end. To this great task we must set our minds without further delay, so that we may meet the great strain of the war and all the confusion and difficulty the war will leave behind it. We have definitely to turn our backs upon the loose and competitive habits whereby the Empire has surrendered its power to be virtually independent and self-supporting. We must no longer think, as Mr. Hughes flatly accuses us of thinking hitherto, in tons and shillings. We have to abandon the attitude towards trade and finance which looked no farther than the immediate economic profit of all transactions. The Empire definitely turned away from that huckstering ideal when the Canadians came to Flanders and the Australians to Anzac. The Empire must not again utterly depend for things essential to its existence upon foreign sources.

This has ceased to be primarily an economic question. There will be no need again to argue an old controversy upon old lines—to prove or disprove that Free Trade is cheap, to set in motion the old battalions of conflicting figures and propositions. The question has now become a question as to whether the British Empire shall or shall not ever again be found in time of war permeated through and through with hostile influence and enemy interests—whether an aggressive Power like Germany shall or shall not be allowed,

after the war, to resume her industrial conquest of British markets and to make herself strong for offence by a scientific economic invasion of Great Britain and the Dominions, directed and assisted by her rulers. Are we, when the war is finished, to be capable of opposing an organised economic resistance, with weapons in our hands in the shape of scientifically planned tariffs and imperial agreements; or are we later on to be caught as unprepared for an economic war as we were for a military war in August 1914?

These are questions which Mr. Hughes has plainly put to us during the last few weeks. They are questions we would like to see answered at once by our leaders in the outright and decisive manner of their asking. Hitherto Mr. Hughes has not received from the Government the public support he has a right to expect. He has been admitted to the councils of the Twenty-two—possibly with a view to surrounding him with the delicate china amid which our leaders at home are accustomed to move, and so impressing upon him the need of circumspection. Happily Mr. Hughes seems quite unaffected by his new surroundings. His value for the public at home lies in his being able to move freely where many of our Ministers are unable to move at all; and he does not seem likely to lose this necessary freedom. Rather, we find in his speeches an even more set resolve to deliver his message as the days go on. *Macte virtute esto*. The message is needed: it is much to the taste and temper of the public at large: it strengthens the hands of whatever Aaron there may be to uphold the drooping arms of the War Council. In time he will and must be answered clearly by the Government in a direct, official statement of policy. For the moment we only know that the Paris Conference has been postponed, and that Mr. Asquith, when last he spoke upon the future economic policy of the Empire, was mainly concerned to comfort a handful of anti-tariff members in the House of Commons who no longer express the views of any considerable or visible section of the electorate.

It is also to be observed that the Government has in practice postponed all question of a tariff by further developing this week its system of voluntary blockade. Instead of seeking to solve the problem of the shortage of ships by imposing a general tariff upon imported articles it has been thought well totally to prohibit certain chosen wares from entering the country at all. A general tariff, besides preparing the way for imperial reciprocity and defence against the organised aggression of the Central Powers, would (1) discourage the import of all but necessary articles, thereby inducing the thrift of whose absence we hear so much; (2) bring in an appreciable revenue upon the articles which our luxurious consumers still insisted upon having; (3) solve the freight question by reducing imports; (4) avoid the arbitrary dislocation or annihilation of particular trades which the absolute prohibition of specified imports involves. Surely the public has a right to know why the Government, in the face of our domestic requirements alone, prefers absolute prohibition to a general tariff. It certainly has a right to know why, apart from these domestic requirements, we have as yet had no clear, definite expression of the Government's attitude to the policy advocated by Mr. Hughes. The Central Powers already have their arrangements well in hand. The Allied Powers are not to meet till May, and meantime our own policy and attitude towards that meeting are not decided. Mr. Lloyd George made that entirely plain on Thursday.

Clearly there is somewhere a brake upon the wheel—a brake which sooner or later will have to be removed. Mr. Hughes insists that the time in which to prepare is short in relation to the immensity of the task. Let there be no delay out of deference to an imaginary opposition. There will be no real opposition. The Parliamentary opposition to an imperial trade policy will crumble as the Parliamentary opposition to compulsory military service crumbled in January last. Manchester itself has candidly admitted

the logic of events—a logic which has shown that commercial takings and national profit are not necessarily the same thing. The war has taught us that industrial questions—questions as to the kind of industry and the channels in which it shall flow—are national questions. We require a national trade policy, and we require it immediately.

#### OUR DUTY TO RUSSIA.

IT is to be hoped that the very tactful, but firm, warning lately addressed to the British by M. Egoroff, foreign editor of the "Novoe Vremya", will not be neglected. M. Egoroff is a political thinker who belongs to the constitutional, or reform, party in Russia—a fact which renders his message to the English all the more significant and striking. Briefly, he pleads that Russia, who has been welcomed by the Governments of Europe as an independent and enthusiastic member of the great Alliance against Germany, may continue, during and after the war, to be judged by her Allies solely on the merits of her conduct and spirit in the common cause—that her constitutional progress and home difficulties may be watched with friendly interest, but that her partners should beware of any tendency, as old Parliamentary Powers, to influence or criticise her institutions, to dictate or suggest to her in her internal affairs, to plan constitutions for her, or assume, because she happens to be the Ally of the Western "Democratic" States, that she must needs think and act precisely as people think and act in Paris and in London.

This warning of M. Egoroff may not seem very obviously necessary at the present moment, and it is not ostensibly addressed to any particular section of the English public. M. Egoroff has the courtesy and humour to observe scrupulously his own advice. He does not suggest to us where we are likely to go wrong in regard to Russia. He does not lecture us upon our past or present demeanour. When, indeed, he desires to illustrate the folly against which his article is directed—the folly of directing foreign policy according to domestic prejudices—he looks into the past of Russia herself for an illustration. Nevertheless, every candid English reader must be well aware as to how and where the cap has fitted us in the past, and may fit us yet again unless we very firmly decline to have any further respect for the voluble and uninformed sect of writers and speakers which is mainly responsible for the false ideas as to Russian life and policy which flourished rankly in England in the decade before the war. For the moment this sect is discreetly silent. It is not making speeches, or, when it does, it carefully tempers its speeches to the necessities of the hour. But it must not be imagined for a moment that the international Socialists and Democrats, whose delight in past time was to insult and travesty our great Ally, have honestly changed their manners or their minds. Even in the heat of the war they presumed to suggest doubts of the Tsar's good faith in his promises to Poland; and when, as they credulously believed, the Russian steam-roller was on its way to Berlin in 1914, they suffered agonies of distress lest the liberties of Europe might lie at the feet of an all-conquering autocratic Russian Empire. Neither the harsh events of the war, nor the mighty spirit of our Ally, has had any real effect upon the stiff prejudices of this venomous claque. They will emerge as soon as it is safe again, and will very quickly show that they have learned nothing and forgotten everything. It will then be our duty to show Russia that these men speak only for themselves, and that the English public at large has learned exactly that friendly understanding and toleration for which M. Egoroff is pleading.

Meantime it is well to be prepared. The SATURDAY REVIEW has more than once insisted on the necessity for a better knowledge of Russia. We have so much to learn about our Russian Ally, and there is so much to unlearn. Russia in the past has been made known to our public chiefly through sensational fiction,

through mob-speeches and mob-pamphlets, and through her own fanatic exiles. There has been too little contact between Russia and England—not enough to correct the crude estimates and ideas picked up from our own Fifth Monarchy men.

The curse of Russia, as her own patriotic statesmen now realise and confess, has been her tendency to accept suggestions from abroad. Russia is resolved to make an end of this, and her Allies will best help her by severely refraining from impertinent criticism or suggestion. Russia in the past has suffered politically as the battle-ground of imported policies. Her political tragedies have arisen out of a conflict between forces neither of which was truly Russian. Her bureaucracy has imported its methods from Berlin. Her revolutionaries have imported their doctrines from Paris. Neither the bureaucrats nor the reformers have had their roots in Russian soil. Meantime the people of Russia, looking always to the Tsar, and keeping their own forms of local self-government alive in the local Zemstvos or parish councils, have had no chance of a constitutional and national political progress. Russia has had to cast out the foreign revolutionaries. Their activities ended, as they needs must end, in bitter reactions. Their Latin wine was not for these Slav bottles. And now Russia, owing to the war, is rooting out also her Prussian borrowings. The Tsar is now meeting and leading his people. The war has brought out the truly national things in Russian life. The Tsar is leading his armies, and the people, through their local councils, have spontaneously organised themselves for war service—more particularly their hospitals are almost entirely the product of local and popular effort. In the great political and national movement here foreshadowed resides the hope of all thinking Russians for the political future of their country, and one of their first anxieties to-day is to ensure a peaceful progress for this national movement, a progress free of pressure, suggestion, or mischievous intrusion of Western ideas upon one side or the other.

It would indeed be an ignoble and foolish policy to seek by any means to disturb the equilibrium of the national parties in Russia. We should be careful here in England not to listen to too much empty talk concerning the "Democratic Powers". It was an old notion of European dynasties that they should hold together—a notion that has more than once brought trouble upon Europe. This notion has been at the back of the German leanings of Russia herself. Bismarck continually played upon the Russian bureaucracy as his natural ally against all revolutionaries, and Russia listened more than once, to her own undoing. Let the "Democratic" Powers be wiser in their generation. The idea that nations can only be allies if they have the same political institutions and habits is, at bottom, an anti-national idea. It is akin to the idea of an international federation of masses organised in opposition to an international caste of classes. No one who believes in the value of national independence, national character and diversity, can have any respect for this sort of thing. It is our duty to see that no word shall go unproved during, or after, the war which in any sense suggests a desire for interference with the domestic difficulties of our Ally. It is enough for all reasonable English observers that Russia is ably working out her problems in her own way, and that she has been firmly true to her alliance. It is not our business, it would be a gross impertinence and an act of ingratitude to our glorious Ally of Erzerum and Przemyśl, if we allowed any suggestion to appear by act or speech that our ways are better than her ways.

## THE GREAT WAR.

APPRECIATION (No 86) BY VIEILLE MOUSTACHE.

THE WESTERN THEATRE.

**M**ANY of the rocks of a military career are at once avoided by those who are born in high places. Princes of the blood are saved from difficulties which

shipwreck an officer of humbler origin. How often have we not experienced the truth of the assertion that strong characters are wont to display themselves in a manner that is more disadvantageous than profitable to their advancement in time of peace? And yet it is character that makes the general. The disfavour of superiors, the innumerable petty jealousies, the minor conflicts on professional questions of tactics or administration, have curtailed many a promising career. Noble parentage helps to overcome many of these difficulties, and the heir of a monarch is assured of an unobstructed path to fame should his ambition so desire. Promotion brings a prince's son in youthful years into the high offices that otherwise only men of mature age attain. With such opportunities it is no wonder that royal lineage has furnished such a large proportion of famous soldiers. Will Verdun break the spell that has for ages been the German mascot? The cycle of wars of past aeons has seldom failed to discover an individual of extraordinary capacity of mind for the particular form of strife common to the period, and with that great gift the possessor has marched to victory and conquest. "Every special calling in life, if it is to be followed with success, requires peculiar qualifications of understanding and soul. Where these are of a high order and manifest themselves by extraordinary achievements, the mind to which they belong is termed genius." It is in the above words that Clausewitz defines a high mental capacity for certain employments, and when these powers of mind and soul are directed and concentrated upon the business of war, he looks for the essence of military genius: "Where there is the creation of new ideas there is genius found" is the interpretation by Mde. de Remusat of this great endowment. Unquestionably the mind that conceived the introduction into war of the stupendous machinery for the destruction of man which science has evolved during a period of peace was gifted with capacity and inspiration. The German has had his reward for long years of devotion to the preparation for a struggle which he had designed. His monster cannon and innumerable machine guns, coming upon his enemy like a surprising avalanche, have carried his arms well across his frontiers, and there he remains, a trespasser, but not a conqueror, undefeated but not victorious. It is by success in reaching a decision from such an existing state of *impasse* that the spirit of genius in a commander will be found. The destruction of the enemy's army is always the preponderating object in a war. It signifies a diminution of his armed strength relatively greater than your own. Not that many a battle has not been won at greater cost to the victor than to the vanquished; but a battle lost by no means signifies the close of a campaign. If by a skilful disposition of forces we can reduce our opponent to such a dilemma that he cannot continue the combat without grave risk and danger, and after a period feels forced to retire, then we may say that we have conquered him at that particular point; but if the net result of casualties are equal, then there is no gain from such victory, if it can be called by such a name.

Three weeks ago it was predicted in these pages (No. 83) that faulty German tactics in the great strategical effort to pierce the Allied line at Verdun would cost the attackers a carnage that they could not sustain. To attempt to break through to Verdun by operating on the right bank only of the river Meuse was to invite a wholesale slaughter from guns of all natures hidden in the folds of ground behind the Mort Homme, the Bois des Corbeaux, the Côte de l'Oie, and other vantage posts on the western bank. The subsequent hostile attempt to rectify the error and master these keys of defence has failed with singular disaster. It came too late, and, as will all disjointed efforts in grand tactics, found our Ally thoroughly ready for the blow. We have thus far had every reason to be grateful to the Crown Prince for his illustration of both modern strategy and battle tactics. The enemy clings with Teuton obstinacy to the shallow fringe

of the defence line that he has won. Let him be the best judge whether the human sacrifice which he must offer daily is commensurate with his hope of a triumph. He has reached but the outer skin of the great nut that he has set himself to crack, and there he fastens, exposed to the batter of many hundred guns. It is easy to conceive the opportunity now given to the modern gunner, who, though denied mobility, when once his guns are fighting can, with the great range power afforded to his weapon, merely slew round the carriage and when freshly anchored in the ground search out and sweep every hidden coign of vantage for a foe. Guns do not fight against guns on such occasions. They seek for other targets. The full force of fire is turned like a hose upon the brave infantryman, the soul of the attack, who constitutes the greatest danger. Never has hell been thus let loose and for such a period as at Verdun. The loss in physical force is not the only one which both sides suffer in a combat. It is not only the loss in men and guns, but in order, courage, confidence, cohesion and plan, which come into calculation when it is a consideration whether the fight can be further continued or not. The moral forces are thus shaken, broken, and threatened with ruin. The test of the relation of these moral forces to one another between opponents becomes apparent when the question of the proportion of reserves that are thrown into the fight becomes critical. The more reserves that one side has expended to sustain the combat the more force has been required to maintain the equilibrium. Something has given way under the strain. Men who have been overtaxed by prolonged engagement are more or less like dead cinders; their ammunition is expended, they have melted away to a certain extent, they are exhausted physically and morally, and their courage has probably been broken as well. Every combat is therefore the bloody and destructive measuring of the strength of forces physical and moral. Whoever at the close has the greatest amount left over is the conqueror. Much as our brave Ally may deplore the loss of his gallant men in their thousands around the defences of the stronghold at Verdun, he can look back with pride to the balance of sacrifice, which weighs heavily against the enemy. The French soldier has little fear of the result. He took the measure of his foe many months ago. Moral, the great element for ultimate victory, passed to the Allied armies in the West when, in the months of October-November 1914, they hurled back masses three times their numbers in the desperate fight at Ypres in the struggle to bar the road to Calais. Never were German arms so near a triumph had they known it. Since those weeks of grave anxiety the factory and the forge have nearly equalised the balance; but for the victory it must be something more than equality in numbers and material that will be required of the Allies.

The death struggle at Verdun will endure until reason re-enters the mind of the Great General Staff at Berlin. It is the good fortune of the Allies that a commander is opposed to them with that spurious variety in force of character which is expressed by the term obstinacy. We can recall the day of 18 August 1870 when old Steinmetz, with equal pertinacity, dashed his two army corps to pieces against the heights of Gravelotte in an attack that was doomed to failure before it started. Von Moltke quickly realised what such misdirection of effort was to cost the German army, and next day King William parted with the veteran field-marshal. We must hope for a longer tether of power for the princeling who is permitted to send larger armies to destruction. We have known the Crown Prince in other days as a man impatient of contradiction, with a particular kind of egotism which sets above every other pleasure that of governing both self and others by its own mind alone. Clausewitz describes such a failing: "We should call it a kind of vanity were it not something much better. Vanity is satisfied with mere show, but obstinacy rests upon the enjoyment of the thing. We say, therefore, force of character degenerates into obstinacy whenever the resistance to opposing judgment proceeds

not from better convictions or a reliance upon a more trustworthy maxim but from a feeling of opposition." The tone of chivalry which pervades the mind of this prince leader may be measured when it is related that when war was on the debating table he, as colonel-in-chief of one of our regiments, telegraphed to the commander a message somewhat to this effect: "If you and your regiment come over to France I hope that we shall cut you to pieces".

The peals which the bellringers of Germany have been called upon to sound in joy for a triumph at Verdun will be rung in muffled tones when they hear the true tale of the ghastly price paid for the dire failure of the efforts of its Crown Prince.

## THE INTRIGUE AGAINST THE ARMY.

By GEORGE A. B. DEWAR.

PEOPLE who have been forced, utterly against their political principles and their disposition, into accepting obligatory military service as an expedient are not in all cases people to trust. Some of them have doubtless accepted this expedient from quite patriotic motives: it would be easy to name two or three Parliamentary leaders to-day who have accepted the measure of obligatory military service which we have already obtained in this spirit, and who may be induced, through national necessity, to accept presently another instalment—the final and crowning one, though I believe there is one leader at least who will, personally, go no farther than he has gone. Again, outside the circle of leadership there are many throughout the country who are animated by the same motive. These are the opponents of obligatory military service or national service, compulsion, conscription—whichever description is preferred—whom we can respect, and so long as the war lasts, and the national need for more men exists, we can in a considerable degree trust. We know that they set country before party and before their inveterate political professions. Obligatory military service is to them, it is true, an expedient, and a very distasteful expedient, but at a large measure of it in the country's need they will not stick. So far, so good. But, unfortunately, this section of men who have at length accepted—with a wry face—obligatory military service as an expedient is not the only one. There is an alert and unforgiving section which has been forced into the expedient because it recognised, when the Military Service Bill was introduced, that to stand out was to be swept aside in public life and be completely stranded. It astutely recognised that it was "done for" as an effective section if it stood out against the measure after the passing of the Act. The parliamentarians in this section saw clearly that they must go in with the Conscriptionists, as they termed them, to save their own skins, and the writers belonging to this section had the same astuteness. The expedient to them was one of self-preservation. They put it off till the last moment—then they came in, full of bitterness and loathing—came in with a sort of lip service to the Act. Self, indeed, was of the essence of the contract with them. Numbers of these people, parliamentarians and writers, are quite well known to every one who has made a careful study of the compulsion movement during the last eighteen months. They are branded like sheep in a flock, unmistakably to the close observer. But this is not to say that the public, as a whole, knows them even by name, or can recognise them at a glance in their writings and speeches. On the contrary, in this section of expediency men are a number of rather subtle gentlemen who impose remarkably on the public. They wear a very thin, small cloak of compulsion, but wrap it round their persons so cleverly that the plain and unsuspecting man, not skilled in the arts of party dressing, fails to see their real nakedness.

Now what these people are avid to do is to smash and ruin the whole principle and the whole practice of

obligatory military service even now, during the war, national need or no national need. There is not any doubt about this. I do not merely think or suspect it, but know it—at least, I am as certain of it as I am that one and one make two, or that there is a war being fought to-day, or that this war began in 1914. I know it because since the beginning of October 1914 I have been concerning myself somewhat closely, from day to day, with the question of obligatory military service, recognising that any other plan is bad and abominably unfair, as well as muddling and dangerous, and have watched carefully, at first, the savage opposition and, later, the artful tricks of that section of expediency men which is really out to kill the principle and the practice of obligatory military service rather than to kill the Germans.

The line of this section is to kill obligatory military service by bringing into all possible odium the Military Service Act. It welcomes, illustrates, rubs in every promising dispute and doubtful point or irregularity connected with that Act which may induce loose and inaccurate talkers and thinkers to believe that the whole system of so-called conscription is a wrong and impracticable one.

Say there is an outcry over some widow's son—"a lone lorn widder's" son—instantly the section is hot on the scent in full chorus! Say that exemption is denied to some stalwart young worker in the chemise export trade (I do not say we do export chemises to foreign countries, but only take this for illustrative purposes), instantly the section that wants to kill obligatory military service screams out that the trade of the country is being ruined by this terrible costly, reckless Conscription, and that we shall not be able to finance our Allies except by Voluntarism. At least, some of the conspirators scream this, if others—the subtler and more underhand ones—only trust themselves to murmur it softly or to write it between the lines.

I do not think that these people are going to succeed in reducing to impotence the Military Service Act, and I have strong hopes that, presently, that measure will be safely and honourably completed—i.e. that we shall have a fair and general law all round for all men of fit age and sound bodies. But, all the same, these intriguers and plotters against the Military Service Act are a dangerous section, and no frightened talk about national unity should for a moment deter us from showing them up and opposing them strenuously and constantly in all directions, and warning the public to be on its guard against them. If we spare them, if we seek to cultivate or shield them, we are not true, but false, to national unity—false and unspeakably foolish. Moreover, we are false to the men in the trenches, false to our glorious and devoted Army abroad and at home. National unity demands that all civilians shall support in every way with their utmost endeavours the Military Service Act, and shall discountenance those who are working, like the mole, just underground, to damage and discredit it. I have written and published scores and scores—literally scores and scores—of articles, notes, letters, and what not in favour of obligatory military service, since October 1914, when the need of it began to be so clear; but I do not think I have ever written anything with more deliberation and conviction than the two sentences above. Not to show up and not to oppose to the best of one's ability and opportunities those who are trying to damage and do to death the Military Service Act in order that they may do to death the principle it contains, is untrue to the whole Army and the country.

But there is a second line on the part of the inveterate and rancorous haters of obligatory military service which we should not altogether overlook. It is perfectly evident, through many signs, that they are saying to themselves and to one another: "If we cannot quite kill this hateful principle now, we must try so to discredit it, at any rate, that after the war it will be abandoned." "Never again!" is their idea. They try to wave aside the example of France in this matter, and their sly writers and speakers are silent about the robust and impassioned declarations in favour of

general obligatory military training by Australians like Mr. Hughes to-day and Sir George Reid, M.P. But patriotic speakers and writers, on the contrary, should be at constant pains to rub in those declarations. They should also impress on the public at every opportunity the weighty and moderate words spoken lately by Lord Kitchener in favour of military training for the youth of the nation. People seem to forget at times that it was Lord Kitchener who gave Australia that magnificent, practical scheme of universal and compulsory military training which is at work to-day; and Australia is going to be a mighty big weapon for the cause of the Allies in this struggle. Is Australia at the conclusion of the war going to abandon the principle which we have at last applied? She is just about as likely to do anything remotely of the kind as she is to join the German Empire!

After the war we shall have to build up out of our experience of the war, and by means of the great principle conveyed in the Military Service Act, a thorough system of national defence. I may be told that to look after the war is useless now, for it implies looking two or three years ahead. But for ends of offence Germany looked many more years than three ahead, and for ends of defence it is far from useless for us to look likewise. Therefore we ought to do nothing, and allow nothing to be done by the intriguers, which may damage at all the Military Service Act, and presently, when the excited hullabaloo of the moment is past, and the Army feels the need for further reinforcements, we should regularise the position of the unattested, and so complete the great work. To-day the countersign among true and intelligent believers in full national service is "Holdfast".

## MIDDLE ARTICLES.

### SORTES SHAKESPEARIANÆ.

#### The Kaiser :

No compunctious visitings of nature  
Shake my fell purpose.

—*Macbeth.*

#### The Crown Prince :

Most forcible Feeble.

—*King Henry IV.*

#### General von Haeseler after Verdun :

Palsied eld.

—*Measure for Measure.*

#### The Man we have not :

I,  
Flutter'd your Volscians in Corioli:  
Alone I did it.

—*Coriolanus.*

#### Dr. Helfferich :

God save the mark.

—*King Henry IV.*

#### Lord Kitchener in the House of Lords :

I am no orator, as Brutus is;  
But, as you know me all, a plain blunt man;  
I only speak right on.

—*Julius Caesar.*

#### Mr. Stanton, M.P. :

Had I a dozen sons . . . I had rather eleven die nobly  
for their country than one voluptuously surfeit out of action.

—*Coriolanus.*

#### Our Men in the Trenches just before the whistle sounds :

I see you stand like greyhounds in the slips,  
Straining upon the start.

—*King Henry V.*

#### The Territorials :

Full bravely hast thou fleshed  
Thy maiden sword

—*King Henry IV.*

#### The Voluntary System :

FIRST PLAYER: We have reformed that indifferently with us, sir.  
HAMLET: O, reform it altogether.

—*Hamlet.*

The No-Conscriptionist Press and Trench-starvers  
trying to damage the Military Service Act :

'Tis as easy as lying.  
—*Hamlet*.

The Unattested Married Man of serviceable age :

Honour pricks me on. Yea but how if honour prick me off  
when I come on? Can honour set a leg? no: or an arm? no.  
. . . What is honour? a word. . . Therefore I'll have  
none of it. . . And so ends my tale.

—*King Henry IV.*

Ditto :

The primrose path of dalliance treads,  
And recks not his own rede.

—*Hamlet*.

Sir John Simon's feelers to the Attested Married  
Men :

Springs to catch woodcocks.  
—*Hamlet*.

The Half-fighters :

We would and we would not.  
—*Measure for Measure*.

Sir John Simon of the Editor of the "Westminster  
Gazette" :

A man of my kidney.  
—*The Merry Wives of Windsor*.

The "Daily News" of Lord Northcliffe in France :

I dote on his very absence.  
—*The Merchant of Venice*.

Sir A. B. Markham, M.P. :

This is Eracles' vein.  
—*A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Mr. Lloyd George :

I will make it felony to drink small beer.  
—*Jack Cade in King Henry VI.*

The Prime Minister :

All his faults observed,  
Set in a note-book, learn'd, and conn'd by rote.  
—*Julius Caesar*.

Of a Naturalised Alien confined under the Defence of  
the Realm Act :

Now art thou within point blank of our jurisdiction regal.  
—*King Henry VI.*

The No-Conscriptionists of the SATURDAY REVIEW :

Thou hast damnable iteration.  
—*King Henry IV.*

## THE BALLAD OF ROLAND LEIGH.

BY GRACE HALL.

**B**EFORE the dim dawn of creation  
Broke first in Eternity,  
Did the devils laugh in the silence  
And mutter of Roland Leigh?

How could I help my darling?  
How could I save my son?  
I, widowed before I was twenty—  
And he was my only one.

Many a man comes softly,  
Speaking so smooth to me,  
Looks with hot eyes of passion  
On the mother of Roland Leigh.

I will have none of their kisses,  
Their love, and their cruel lust,  
For the child of my youth is lying  
A handful of tainted dust.

Had I been God Almighty  
To choose what my son should be,  
I would not have chosen Jesus,  
For dearer was Roland Leigh!

I would not have chosen Jesus,  
Gentle, and mild, and sweet,  
His fair locks, His eyes of azure,  
His lily-white hands and feet.

Rather my lad with the black brows,  
Burning with life's unrest—  
The bold young glance and the proud head  
That slept on my girlish breast.

They talk of our "fallen sisters"  
(Thus the canting phrases run),  
But which of our fallen sisters  
Has murdered my only son?

Where the leperous horde of women  
Prowl nightly up and down,  
To the chambers of death she had lured him,  
In the streets of a Christian town.

Sweet Mother and Virgin, Mary,  
Who loved thine own Son so dear,  
He died in his full-grown manhood,  
My boy in his nineteenth year.

One long day's torture, ah, Mother!  
Christ suffered 'till peace was won;  
I looked for weeks on the anguish  
Of Roland, my only son.

And if I were God Almighty—  
They say He does all things well—  
The poisonous, prostitute army  
Should burn in the depths of Hell.

Before the dim dawn of Creation  
Broke first on Eternity,  
The devils laughed in the silence—  
Muttering of Roland Leigh.

## MOUSSORGSKY AND BORODIN.

BY JOHN F. RUNCIMAN.

**A** GOOD many years there were amongst us purists who believed it sin to give a Wagner scene in the concert room. Battles raged and were, I suppose, fought and won. But the whole controversy is forgotten to-day, and, if it were not, Sir Thomas Beecham's concert on Monday with the London Symphony Orchestra must have ended it for every intelligent person. The concert was by no means devoted to operatic excerpts—there was only one in a programme of at least three long pieces. (I do not count a song or the overture to "The Wreckers", as I did not stay to hear them: I am tired of tedious music.) The one opera selection was a scene from Moussorgsky's "Boris Godounov", and it is no exaggeration to say that it overwhelmed everything else in the programme—even in a sense Borodin's mighty symphony. Sir Thomas started with two preludes from Granville Bantock's setting of old Omar. That work I once wrote of here, but it will require writing of again. I confess it seemed less a work of art than a curiosity, but that view may require modification. Of the two preludes the second is the better: the aim of the first is indefinite and the execution sprawling. To depict the shadows of night is all very well, but to paint vagueness demands the master's hand and a high degree of concentration. The Muezzin's call to prayer—on the brass—does not in the least suggest Persia and the Far East to me, but it shouts "Parsifal" pretty plainly. The second prelude, telling us how Omar put his first wife, Reason, to the door, and took in her place the daughter of the vine, has far more purpose and real life. How far it gives us anything of the atmosphere of Fitzgerald's poem is quite another question—one of those questions which, as I have just said, it will be necessary to go into before long. Anyhow, the prelude is a very jolly piece of music.

Then came Moussorgsky's scene. First let me remind my readers that this novelty is nearly fifty years old. The daring innovator who wrote it has been in his grave nearly forty years. The date of the music accounts for many apparent incongruities in the choice of material, in the technical manner of treating it, and in the general musical style. The scene is that in which Boris is seen slowly going mad, harried by remorse. Being a blood-relation of Ivan the Terrible, he frets much over his murder of a young boy who stood between him and the Throne. Yet the situation is tragic in the extreme—and seemingly, when first we begin to hear it, the music is not tragic at all. Only after listening to it carefully for a few minutes does one realise that these orchestral strains, of an indescribable loveliness, are dramatically appropriate, and, as a matter of fact, true. I know of no other piece of music in which so high an order of beauty is so long sustained. The effect is to fill the air, as it were, with a strange sweetness, which lingers long after the piece is finished. Any number of the phrases are old-fashioned in contour, but are so blent with hints of Russian folk-music that they preserve the freshness of the once new, for ever new, thing. Now, Moussorgsky lets us have a few occasional snorts from the brass, and the strings have plenty of strident passages to prevent the sweetness becoming insipid. But whereas a modern composer would have given us little else but these, he trusts to getting his atmosphere right. The last part of the scene, Boris's nightmare of the chiming clock, contains some things harsh enough to please the most extravagant modern Russian; but these effects serve their proper purpose and occur in their proper place. The voice part is magnificently written, and must be extremely trying to sing. Mr. Auguste Bouilliez showed himself a perfect artist in his interpretation of it.

With the beauty of this music still in our ears—I might almost say in our nostrils—Sir Thomas Beecham in cold blood did one of those deeds of which a true artist should be ashamed. Dvorak, in his last days, took to writing what he called symphonic poems. These achievements are symphonic, inasmuch as they are long and for the orchestra; poems they most emphatically are not. Of all the stupid and disgusting, loathsome tales in the world, commend me to "The Golden Spinning Wheel". There is no real tale, but an account of a series of incidents at once absurd and impossible. Passing over all the romantic subjects from which a composer can choose if he wants to write symphonic poems, Dvorak chose this meaningless abomination. Now I remember the late Mr. Blumenberg remarking, meditatively, "I suppose if you offered Dvorak five hundred dollars to write a symphony, he would sit down and write one". In a sense that seems to have been true. His facility on the one hand, and total lack of power of self-criticism, enabled him at any moment to sit down and cover hundreds of pages of music paper. This is what he has done in the case of the "Golden Spinning Wheel". For some twenty-five minutes a tide of orchestral tone sweeps on, coming from nowhere (there are no recognisable themes) and leading to nowhere. Leading to nowhere, I say, because Dvorak cuts himself off from any chance of a real climax by putting forth his full strength at every tenth bar. My grievance against Sir Thomas is this: he was going to give us the great Borodin symphony, and prepared us for the comparatively thin scoring by dinning into our ears all this noisy emptiness. It was an artistic faux pas of the worst kind. Apart from that, I cannot understand Sir Thomas's desire to play such rubbish at all.

However, we got to Borodin at last; and it was interesting to feel how the atmosphere evoked by Moussorgsky seemed to blend with this work. Of course, Borodin is miles away from Moussorgsky, but both infused the spirit of Russia into their music, and there must always be a national likeness—a sort of family likeness on a huge scale. Russian though "Boris Godounov" is, I feel that we hear the true

Russia, the whole Russia, speak for the first time in this symphony of Borodin. In that great rugged, uncouth opening theme we can feel one aspect of the people and the country perfectly well known to the composer: to the naïve second subject there clings the wild scent of folk song. The scherzo manifests in its highest degree Borodin's power of striking the note of magic. The rapid horn notes in the middle register, the ascending pizzicato culminating in the sudden burst of laughter of the wind—these things make an enchanting piece of music and show Borodin's sheer power of invention. The slow movement has more in common with Moussorgsky than the other numbers: it, too, is magical and conjures up a picture of a fairy-land Russia, with lovers and what not talking their sweet nothings. The last movement is full of terrific energy, but it is not of the barbaric sort we get in the first movement. Rather it suggests a festive, rather rowdy, but good-natured scene. However that may be, it forms a magnificent conclusion to one of the most gorgeous symphonies ever written.

## GOETHE UPON THE ENGLISH.

BY A CORRESPONDENT.

AT the close of his life Goethe was very much troubled by the evil influence of large European towns on health and on morals. He discussed this matter with Eckermann in 1828, and Eckermann mentioned some puny, diminutive troops drawn from a great city.

"The Scotch Highlanders under the Duke of Wellington", said Goethe, "were doubtless heroes of another sort".

"I saw them in Brussels a year before the Battle of Waterloo", Eckermann answered. "They were, indeed, fine men; all virile, eager, and active, as if fresh from their Maker's hand. They carried their heads so freely and gallantly, and their strong bare legs stepped out so lightly that there seemed to be no original sin and no ancestral failing, in so far as they were concerned".

"There is something peculiar in this", said Goethe. "Whether it comes from the race, from the soil, from the free political Constitution, or from the healthy tone of education—certainly the English in general appear to have certain advantages over many others. Here in Weimar we see only a few of them, and, probably, not the best; but what fine, handsome people they are. And however young they may be, they feel themselves by no means strange or embarrassed in this foreign atmosphere. Far from it, their deportment in society is as full of confidence and as easy as if they were lords everywhere, and the whole world belonged to them. This it is which pleases our women, and by which they make such havoc in the hearts of our young ladies. . . . They are dangerous young people; but this very quality of being dangerous is their virtue".

"Ah", said Eckermann, "but I would not assert that the young Englishmen in Weimar are more intelligent, better informed, or more excellent at heart than other people".

"My good friend", answered Goethe, "the secret does not lie in these things. Nor does it lie in birth and riches; it lies in the courage they have to be that for which nature has made them. There is nothing vitiated or spoilt about them, there is nothing half-way or crooked; but, such as they are, they are thoroughly complete men. That they are also at times complete fools I allow with all my heart, but that is still something, and ever will have some weight in the scale of nature.

"The happiness of personal freedom, the consciousness of an English name, and of the importance attached to it by other nations, are an advantage even to the children; for in their own families, as well as in their schools, they are treated with far more respect, and enjoy a far freer development than is the case of us Germans.

"In our own dear Weimar I need but look out of the window to discover how matters stand with us. Lately, when snow was on the ground and my neighbour's children were trying their little sledges in the street, the police were immediately at hand, and I saw the poor little things fly as quickly as they could. . . . Not a boy may crack a whip, or sing, or shout: the police forbid it."

What Goethe admired most in the English was their practical understanding and their cool, unyielding courage. Hence his great admiration for Wellington. On 15 February 1826 Eckermann saw Wellington, who was passing through Weimar on his way to St. Petersburg. Goethe was very excited when he heard of this good luck, and said: "What was he like?—tell me all about him. Does he look like his portrait?" "If you ever look at his face all the portraits of him are nothing", Eckermann answered. "His eyes are brown and of the sereneest brilliancy—one feels the effect of their glance; his mouth speaks, even when it is closed; he looks a man who has had many thoughts, who has lived through the greatest deeds, who can handle the world now with quiet detachment, because nothing more can ruffle him. He seemed to me as hard and as tempered as a Damascus blade". "You have seen one hero more", said Goethe.

As for his feelings towards English literature, they were often feelings of pure veneration. His delight in Sir Walter Scott is familiar to all literary students, and he praised Carlyle as "a moral force of great importance"; adding: "There is in him much for the future, we cannot foresee what he may not produce and effect". Goethe's devotion to the genius of Byron has not appealed to later critics, but Byron was a child of war, of revolt and revolution, and may come soon to his own again. Goldsmith and Fielding and Sterne were other favourites; and as for his praise of the Elizabethans, it remains as eloquent in talk as Coleridge's. Looking at Shakespeare, surrounded by Marlowe, Massinger, Ben Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher, with other smaller big men, Goethe said: "It is with Shakespeare as with the mountains of Switzerland. Transplant Mont Blanc at once into the large plain of Lüneberg Heath and we should find no words to express our wonder at its magnitude. Seek it in its gigantic home, go to it over its immense neighbours—the Jungfrau, the Finsterahorn, the Eiger, Wetterhorn, St. Gothard, and Monte Rosa—Mont Blanc will, indeed, still remain a giant, but it will no longer produce in us such amazement.

"Besides, let those who will not believe that much of Shakespeare's greatness comes from his great vigorous time, only ask themselves the question whether a phenomenon so astounding would be possible in the present England of 1824, in these evil days of criticising and hair-splitting journals? . . . Our talents at present lie before the public, and the daily criticism that appears in fifty different places, with the gossip provoked by it among the public, prevent the fruition of sound merit. He who does not keep aloof from all this, isolating himself by main force, will be lost. . . ."

Another thought: "Shakespeare gives us golden apples in silver dishes. No doubt we get the silver dishes by studying his works; but, unluckily, we have only potatoes to put into them".

Goethe detested politics, and held himself aloof from them, believing that a poet, like a soldier, should trouble himself about political matters only so far as they concern him. "Mind", said he, "the politician will eat up the poet. . . . I hate all bungling like sin, but most of all bungling in State affairs, which produces nothing but mischief to thousands and millions. . . . I have disdained to mingle in political parties. To please such people I must have become a member of a Jacobin club, and preached bloodshed and murder". Yet the greatest achievements of political genius, British freedom and the British Empire and Napoleon's Code of Laws and his wondrous life, held him always with their fascination. He was never in the least German in his attitude to Napoleon.

If the spirits of the greatest dead—unseen as the

air and wind—have watched through twenty months the renewal in war of all human vices and of all human virtues, with which side does Goethe sympathise? Can he stand side by side with Shakespeare, Dante, Milton, Corneille, for example, and abominate with them the aboriginal wild beast in the crimes of Germany? Does he still believe that the native land of his poetical powers and poetical action is a beautiful nobility, which belongs to no particular nation? What is his present view of "bungling in State affairs, which produces nothing but mischief to thousands and millions"? Or, after watching from shadow land since 1832 the stupendous changes in Germany, has he grown into the German megalomania?

Is there no poet to answer these epic questions?

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON VENEREAL DISEASES.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.  
22, Porchester Terrace, Hyde Park, W.,

23 March 1916.

SIR,—If the public realised the immense importance of the economic questions recently brought into prominence by the Report of the Royal Commission on Venereal Diseases there would be no necessity for medical men and sociologists to emphasise the need for immediate action. But the existence of these diseases and their far-reaching and deadly effects have until lately, by an inexplicable consensus of opinion, been relegated to obscurity.

At a moment when the eyes of the whole world are fixed upon the battlefields of Europe and Asia, there is some danger that the proper consideration of this urgent question may once more be postponed; indeed, the Commissioners state that they fear their recommendations may not receive the immediate attention their national importance demands. The problem is, however, not only urgent, but it grows more urgent every day. The well-known experience of former wars is that the return of millions of men when the war ends will coincide with an enormous recrudescence of these diseases.

The comparatively trifling outlay of public money now, to bring about the administrative changes necessary for the diagnosis and treatment of venereal disease at its early and curable stage, as recommended by the Commissioners, is negligible when compared with the immense saving to the nation which would ensue. It is not only a reasonable proposition, but absolutely imperative that steps should be taken forthwith, for in these times we cannot afford to penalise future generations.

Those who have studied the subject from a National health standpoint know that the expense of stamping out these diseases would be recouped many times over by the saving of infant life, the reduction in the maintenance of lunatic asylums and institutions for the blind, the deaf and dumb, to say nothing of the diminution in the numbers of the incapable, degenerate and prematurely aged who enter the Poor Law infirmaries.

The scheme of the Commission is that modern treatment should be available free of cost to the individual at our hospitals, and that the larger local authorities should organise schemes for the early cure of the disease. The findings of the Commission constitute a powerful argument in favour of the initiation of measures of this sort for prevention and treatment at the earliest possible moment, in order to keep in repair that vast machinery—i.e., the health of the nation.

The question must be grappled with from a national point of view. The sufferer should be regarded as a patient, not as a moral leper. The issue is primarily not a moral one, but one of racial vigour and national hygiene. This is not the time for recrimination or the preaching of platitudes, but for action. If the question of morality is raised, it seems to me that the paramount consideration is whether the innocent are to be allowed to suffer with the guilty, for the Report abundantly proves that the effects of these diseases fall

to an appalling extent upon the just as well as the unjust.

The Report of the Royal Commission must indeed be a startling document to those who are seized of the special necessity at the present juncture for diminishing the death rate and increasing the efficiency of the manhood of the population.

Take, for instance, infant life; there are 800,000 children born annually in England and Wales, of whom 100,000 die before attaining the age of one year. A large proportion are known to die of these diseases, and a still larger proportion of still-births is due to the same cause. Moreover, about one-third of infantile blindness and one-third of infantile deafness in this country is due to the diseases with which this Commission deals.

The Commissioners report that no less than 10 per cent. of the adult population of large cities is infected with syphilis, acquired or congenital, a disease which is well known to be the cause of the most serious affections of the nervous system. In 1911 half of the males who died in the London County Asylums suffered from general paralysis of the insane, which the Commissioners tell us is wholly due to the diseases they have investigated. Eighty-six per cent. of the inmates of these asylums are between the ages of 25 and 55, just when they would otherwise have been economically and reproductively of most value to the State. Sir William Osler, in his evidence before the Commission, placed syphilis as fourth of the killing diseases.

These facts speak for themselves.

Yours faithfully,

JOHN COLLIE.

#### VERDUN.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—Gibbon, in chapter 34 of his history of Rome, compares the two conquerors of old, Attila the Hun, and Timur the Tartar, and concludes that either of them richly and equally deserved the epithet of "the scourge of God". He relates, quoting from an historian of the day, how the people of Ispahan supplied 70,000 skulls for the "structure of several lofty towers". The Kaiser, the greatest criminal of all times, the absolute ruler of a people whose innate brutality is only covered with veneer, and which has at its disposal all the means for death and destruction that modern skill and science can produce, is a far greater danger to the safety and prosperity of the world than ever was the "scourge of God". If Timur could dispose of 70,000 skulls of those he had conquered for building towers, the Kaiser, who, it is reported, watched the slaughter of his devoted soldiers "from a safe distance", can boast that at least three times the number of Timur's towers could be erected by him from the skulls of his own troops slain about Verdun. The wonderful artist Raemaeker must have had such an idea in his head when he drew that graphic, but ghastly, picture which appeared in "Land and Water" last week. The Kaiser and his worthy heir are represented as standing on a vast mountain of skulls, trying to get a view of Verdun; and the latter says to his father: "We must have a higher pile to see Verdun".

Those have arrived now who have witnessed the horrors of the German attacks, which have been defeated and smashed by our glorious Allies themselves, without any direct aid from our armies; they have gained their *révanche* for the cruelties and indignities inflicted by the Germans on France in 1870-71, when our Government calmly and selfishly looked on and allowed her, weak and unprepared as she was, to be crushed to the ground. We are paying now for the pusillanimity of our forebears. An eye-witness from Verdun relates that the German troops, in never-ending numbers and in dense masses, the men being all drugged with ether, advanced, time after time, against the curtain of fire, from which 80,000 death-bearing projectiles were hurled at them in an hour. The Germans were swept away till the country around

was covered with piles and rows of corpses, over which the half-dazed survivors painfully strove to advance. Their losses are said to be far greater than those reported—viz., 250,000, and one may safely affirm that never in the world's history has there been such a wilful holocaust of troops, sacrificed as victims to the boundless arrogance and ambition of a being devoid of all mercy or sympathy with the sufferings of others. Could anyone but a callous, blood-thirsty monster destroy thus the manhood of his subjects and the prosperity of his country? What reckes he and his vicious heir for the misery he has brought on his land, for the millions of German families bereaved, for the sorrows of the women he has made widows and the children he has made orphans? As he thus devastates his own people, who can wonder at his system of carrying on war against his enemies; who can be surprised at the atrocious crimes committed by his soldiery in Belgium, France, Poland, and Serbia? Is it not natural that such a being should order the sinking of the "Lusitania" and the murder of women and children by means of Zeppelins? Can anyone believe that his underlings would dare thus to carry on war unless the All-Highest so willed it? There is some speculation as to what this continued ferocious attack on Verdun means. There is no need thus to speculate. The plan is one of desperation, but it is a determined effort to carry out the original programme for the acquisition of world-power. The Kaiser himself, in his great speech to his Ministers of State and the heads of his Army and Navy in 1908, of which Mr. Le Queux states that he placed a copy in the hands of the late Government; Rudolf Martin, in his book, "William II. and Edward VII.", in which he attributed every possible kingly virtue to the former and every twist of deceit and hatred of Germany to the latter; Bernhardt, over and over again, indicated the plans of Germany. France was to be given a knock-down blow, from which she could not recover—this, of course, meant the capture of Paris and its destruction by the Huns. Then all the might of Germany and Austria was to be turned against Russia, with whom it was supposed terms could, without difficulty, be arranged—and then for the fall of the British Empire! Bernhardt went so far indeed as to say that Germany could not succeed unless either France or Russia was made innocuous to begin with. Bismarck, on the other hand, predicted that the Kaiser would go mad and destroy Germany by going to war simultaneously with both France and Russia. In his day there were not better, but wiser, men at the head of affairs. It was to carry out this plan that the treaty regarding Belgium was treated as a scrap of paper, and von Kluck's huge army was hurled at Paris, which was to fall into his hands in a fortnight, this being frustrated by Sir John French and his "contemptible little army" and smashed by French and British at the battle of the Marne. The much-vaunted German General Staff have been at sea ever since, thrusting here and thrusting there, gaining much territory, it cannot be denied, but nothing that tended to help her to the realisation of her inflated plans. Now she knows that, unless a grand coup is made, her situation is hopeless, and the huge movement against Verdun is evidently the last hazard of the die of the desperate gambler. It is remarkable—one may say, indeed, providential—how the atrocious crimes of Germany against Belgium have brought their own punishment on the brutal aggressor. Had the Kaiser and the German General Staff acted as wisely as Bismarck did in 1870-71 and upheld the treaty of 1839 as to Belgium, and instead, when the British Government was undecided as to its entrance to the quarrel and came in only because of the violation of Belgium, thrown its might on Paris by Verdun, with its magnificent first line troops and reserve, nothing could have saved Paris. The French were not ready. The black memories of 1870-71 still hovered over them and depressed them, and they had not then discovered how infinitely superior they were as fighting men to the boasted Huns, as superior as were Napoleon's legions to those of the Prussians at Jena, Auerstädt, and Ligny. Germany,

in her despair, will deal some deadly blows, like a wild beast cornered and at bay, and she will probably eventually send out her bottled-up fleet on a wild venture against ours.

Two years ago Germany was at the zenith of her prosperity and the Kaiser ruled over the most flourishing and progressive nation in the world; now she has lost everything that a nation holds dear, except honour, of which she had none to lose. As to the vain-glorious tyrant himself, we may read the moral in the words of Claudian:

"Jam non ad culmina rerum  
Injustos crevisse queror: tolluntur in altum  
Ut lapsu graviore ruant".

Claudian, "Rufinum", Lib. I v. 25.

But in his approaching fall he will destroy all he can, both foe and friend, like Sardanapalus; so let us beware.

ALFRED E. TURNER.

### PEACE METHODS IN WAR.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—I have read with regret, not unmixed with apprehension, that proposals are being made for the establishment of new Ministries—one for aircraft, the other for commerce and industry. Surely the experience of the past eighteen months has taught us that politicians—and a Minister, whatever his antecedents, must by his position be involved in politics—are not the people for prompt action. When our Ministers have taken satisfactory action it has generally been as a tardy yielding to outside pressure. As an argument in favour of new Ministries, that of munitions might be cited, though there is little real analogy. For in this case there were new and somewhat unprecedented Acts to administer and threatened industrial troubles to meet, which might well absorb the energies of a special department; something, too, was hoped from Mr. Lloyd George's presumed popularity with the working classes, though in this direction the results have perhaps been disappointing.

On the other hand, Lord Derby's success as a leader has unquestionably been due to his standing outside politics, and it may well be questioned whether he could have exercised the same driving power had he been hampered by being one of a Ministry and so bound to defer to some extent to the opinions of his colleagues. Notwithstanding his disclaimer in the House of Lords, who will be found to believe that Mr. Asquith's courage would have been screwed up to the point of giving his pledge in unmistakable language—in words, by the way, which had to be put into his mouth by Lord Derby for communication to the public—had it not been for Lord Derby's pressure behind him? And could that same pressure have been exercised had Lord Derby been a Minister? I for one fancy not, and therefore deprecate tying the hands of those who are to control these matters by placing them in this position. The road to efficiency seems to lie in the direction of finding the right men, giving them ample powers, and in the politicians leaving them alone. In times of peace we have got into the habit of thinking that any new departure is only to be met by establishing a new Ministry, a step just one degree more practical than referring the matter to a Royal Commission, but we seem yet to be a long way from realising that the methods of peace are far from being suited to the emergencies of war.

LL.D., F.R.S.

### THE REAL DANGER OF PANIC JOURNALISM.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

22 February 1916.

SIR,—The real danger of panic journalism is not so much that it unduly alarms and discourages the public as that it so often provokes counter-statements which result in the unjustifiable reassurance of the public.

Again and again, in the course of the war, popular estimates of the difficulties attendant upon this or that naval or military operation have been grotesquely inadequate; with inevitably corresponding inadequacy in the quality of the services rendered by the community to the State.

It goes without saying that the problem of substituting for all this smug satisfaction at least some measure of realisation of the nature of the task before us is worthy the attention of every true patriot. Unhappily, patriotism does not always appear to connote discretion or even common sense, and so we have the worse than futile spectacle of the over zealous purveyor of strong stimulants only serving to prepare the way for the administering of still stronger narcotics. Which of these rival types of misguided endeavour would prove the more disastrous in the long run, if granted equal opportunity, it is difficult to say. They are not granted equal opportunity, however, for, no matter what subject may be under debate, the panic-reproving champion of reassurance always seems to succeed in securing the last word.

The tactics of the panic journalist (whose patriotic intention, by the way, the writer does not call in question for one moment) are rudimentary in the extreme, and invariable. He bluntly informs the possibly overconfident believer in the adequacy of our naval surveillance of merchantmen, or in the big-gun superiority of British over German Dreadnoughts, or in the mastery by the Allies of all that concerns the heavier-than-air machine, that the naval search is an absolute farce, that the armament of the enemy's ships is more powerful than that of the "Queen Elizabeth", and that the German will soon extend his acknowledged supremacy with the dirigible over the whole field of aerial warfare.

Encouraged by the silence of the "optimistic" papers, which astutely await an official lead before commencing their attack, he persists in these exaggerations until a perfectly well-deserved Government exposure of their extravagance opens the flood-gates of a no less extravagant torrent of public reassurance, and the incident apparently closes.

Meanwhile, the naval blockade may not be absolutely proof against sanely conducted criticism; nor the re-gunning, within certain well-prescribed limits, of some of the enemy's ships be altogether impossible; nor the legends of the "Fokker" efficiency be quite as legendary as the sworn foes of "Panic" would have us believe. Some day a patriot whose zeal is equalled by his discretion may attempt true enlightenment. He will fail; and the responsibility for his failure will rest, in the main, at the door of the panic journalist, whose discredited exaggerations of statement have closed the ears of all who once heeded them to any future word of justifiable warning.

Yours faithfully,

"REALIST."

### LIBERTY AND LICENCE.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

New Oxford and Cambridge Club,  
Pall Mall, S.W.

14 March 1916.

SIR,—The thoughtful letter over the signature of Arthur Lovell, entitled "Liberty and Licence", deserves something more than passing notice. It is a plea for clear thinking and well considered action, not only in this war, but in the solving of all those social questions, temporarily shelved for the moment, but which will demand solution when the war is over.

And, if I read this letter aright, it points to the creation of a new party, an Imperial party, one that will be above mere party politics, which have become more and more nauseating, and which, it is to be hoped, will be relegated to the limbo of forgotten things when the men come back from the front.

The return of these men may materially assist in the formation of such a party. They will have faced realities, and will turn their backs on those who in-

dulge in petty party squabbles, and insist—at least, I hope so—upon the nation's work being properly done. The policy which leads to "muddling through" must go by the board. It has led us to the brink of national disaster often enough. Another asset which will assist in drawing a sharp line, which Mr. Lovell rightly insists must be drawn, between liberty and licence, is the training in obedience which our young men are now undergoing. There, at least, is a foundation to work on of a very solid kind, and it would be well if this training were compulsory after the war is over.

Mr. Lovell closes his letter by saying that the great questions which are confronting the Empire will require "strong, skilful, and perhaps ruthless handling", and that the political machinery will have to be repaired and renewed to do it. That is so. The pressing need at present is for a great independent leader, not one trammelled by party considerations or afraid to act because of the votes of any party holding the balance of power, whether it be Irish, Labour, Conservative, or Radical. A great Imperial party, headed by such a leader, pledged to carry out reforms for the good of the whole community, not dominated by, say, the brewing, or any other interest, with no axe to grind but the national axe, would soon make short work of those questions now waiting for solution. Reform of procedure in the House of Commons is certainly urgently necessary. It is time the Parliamentary bore was made to hold his peace. Shorter speeches should be a *sine qua non*, and there should be no legislation possible under the insane conditions that now prevail. To attempt to carry great reforms after an all-night sitting, when men are totally unfit to legislate, instead of commencing parliamentary business at an earlier hour, when the mind is clear, is unhealthy, unbusiness-like, and undignified. With an extension of the vote to women, and with the experience our young men will have gained by this war—it is to be hoped that only candidates will be voted for whose public and private record is clean, who put their country first, and who, with regard to social matters, will legislate for the good of the community as a whole and not for the benefit of some particular section of it. By returning such men to Parliament, men of worth and of high ideals, call the party by what name you will, there will then be some chance of long-needed legislation being carried out whereby the well-being of the whole community may be enhanced. Is it not possible to form such a party?

Yours, etc.,

J. W. WILLIAMS.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Beckenham,

21 March 1916.

SIR,—I read with great interest Mr. Arthur Lovell's letter on the above subject. It holds the opinions of a large class of people who are delighted to see put forward in print what they think and feel inwardly and are yet not able to express themselves to their own satisfaction, and perhaps that of anyone else.

Even as charity begins at home, so it is with salvation, which we cannot hope to find anywhere but within ourselves. So, as a nation, we have no one to blame or thank but ourselves.

It is interesting to focus one's attention on the important differences between liberty and licence; for liberty, though a thing much cherished by the Anglo-Saxon, is apt to lead one astray unless he sees clearly, and knows that to overstep the boundary line merely leads back to slavery in one form or another.

We are proud of our liberty—and rightly so; but we need to test our mental grasp on the course of discrimination—which will show clearly that, though licence may prove alluring and endure for a time, she has no "staying" power, and those who back her in the long run will discover to their loss that she "also ran".

On the whole, the mists seem to be clearing, and I hope

you will continue to hold the mirror up to Nature and make us see ourselves as we are, in order to enable us to move on and do better in the future.

Yours, etc.,

MARJORIE O. CROWTHER.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

107, Park Lane, Croydon,

21 March 1916.

SIR,—I read with great interest and appreciation the letter on "Liberty and Licence" by Mr. Lovell, which recently appeared in your paper. It is a subject to which I and, I think, many others have given much thought of late. It is evident that if individual liberty is allowed to go beyond a certain point it becomes licence. At what point does it become licence? The answer is self-evident, although, obvious as it is, very few people seem to have seen it. When individual liberty tends to interfere with the liberty of the State, then it becomes licence and must be curtailed, if not stopped altogether. From this it will be seen that we, people and Government alike, have been for years deliberately fostering the spirit of licence in the guise of freedom. With what result? War within and war without.

On looking back over the past years it is almost beyond belief that we can have gone on listening to the talk of peace, perfect peace—not only listening, but receiving it with acclamation—and not have seen the hollow mockery of it. Peace? Where was it? Strife in the industrial world, strife in politics, strife everywhere, almost civil war. And then—war from without. And there are those who, having ears they hear not, and eyes, they see not, would still go on in the same old way, would still preach the same old doctrine—the doctrine of licence. Voluntarism in connection with the defence of the Empire is the spirit of licence; trade unionism as it now stands is the spirit of licence. This doctrine of licence must be uprooted and burned in the fire of the spirit of true liberty, and it must be done now. We must not for one moment dream of going back to our old ways, the ways of licence.

"No happiness without order, no order without authority, no authority without unity."

Yours faithfully,

LESLIE H. IDIENS.

#### THE START OF THE SPRING.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—The spring is coming, imperceptibly perhaps to the gross ear and grosser sense of touch which are common to most of us, but coming in earnest, as a good many little things in England to-day show. The chaffinch knew this so far back as the morning of 15 February soon after light, when it was singing well again in Sussex. On 2 March the hedgesparrows warbled, though the weather was raw and forbidding. To-day, 19 March, the blackbird was not only singing in London, but singing so late as 6.25 p.m. The green plovers will be laying in less than a fortnight their first eggs, and the missel thrush doubtless has started now on her nest; also perhaps the long-tailed titmouse in some districts in the South of England.

Yours, etc.,

A BIRD LOVER.

#### "GLORIOUS JOHN".

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Montrose, March 1916.

SIR,—It seems impossible, even in desultory reading, to get away from the war. Trying to soothe my mind with "Glorious John", I came on some apparently prophetic passages. They are from "King Arthur". The play deals with an episode in the war of the "British Worthy" against the heathen Saxons. Conon, a tributary of King Arthur, and Aurelius, a friend, are discussing the situation.

Oswald, "King of Kent"—a tottering king—is the leader of their foes.

ACT I.—SCENE I.

CONON : Oswald undoubtedly will fight it bravely.

AURELIUS : And it behoves him well, 'tis his last stake.

But what manner of man is this Oswald?

(To Albanact.)

CON. : I know him well; he's free and open-hearted.

AUR. : His country's character : that speaks a German.

CON. : Revengeful, rugged, violently brave,

And, once resolved, is never to be moved.

ALB. : Yes, he's a valiant dog, pox on him.

CON. : Arthur is all that's excellent in Oswald,  
And void of all his faults. In battle brave,  
But still serene in all the stormy war,  
Like heaven above the clouds; and after fight,  
As merciful and kind to vanquished foes  
As a forgiving God.

But the Saxons are not only heathens. They are allied, though they hardly realise it, with the Powers of Hell, and are assisted by Grimbald, "a fierce earthy spirit":

SCENE II.

GRIM. : I have played my part,  
For I have steeled the fools that are to die—  
Six fools, so prodigal of life and soul  
That, for their country, they devote their lives  
A sacrifice to Mother Earth and Woden.

[N.B.—It was Nietzsche who declared Odin to be "greater than Jehovah", but he had as poor an opinion of the Germans as Grimbald, the fiend, had of the Saxons, though he helped them for reasons of his own.]

OSMUND (a Saxon magician) : Say, where's thy fellow-servant Philidel?

Why comes not he?

GRIM. : For he's a puling spirit.

OSM. : What a half-devil is he!

His errand was to draw the lowland damps,  
And noisome vapours from the foggy fens,  
Then breathe a baleful stench, with all his force,  
Full on the faces of our christened foes.

GRIM. : Accordingly he drained those marshy grounds  
And bagged them in a blue pestiferous cloud;  
Which, when he should have blown, the frightened elf  
Espied the red-cross banners of their host,  
And said he durst not add to his damnation.

These extracts enable us to trace the inspiration which prompted the use of asphyxiating gas to its proper source. They also—when read in the light of modern facts—enable us to realise the enormous advance that Germany has made in chemistry, in unscrupulousness, in disregard of the Red Cross and of the Holy Cross generally.

I remain, yours truly,

R. J. M.

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—In "Fifty Years of My Life", by Lord Albemarle, I find the statement given below. It is, perhaps, worth record.

Colonel Tidy was in Paris with his regiment after the battle of Waterloo, and he writes home:

"We have come into a place successively occupied by Russians, Cossacks, and Austrians, and, would you believe it, of the three they (the French) prefer the Cossacks."

Your obedient servant,

F. C. CONSTABLE.

REVIEWS.

"THE SOUL OF THY BROTHER."

"The Dark Forest." By Hugh Walpole. Secker. 6s.

MR. HUGH WALPOLE has written a fine book about the war. It is a record of things felt and seen while serving under the Red Cross in Russia, and, although it is written in terms of narrative and interwoven with a love story, its fascination lies not in the tale but in its atmosphere. Here we have Russia in the throes of the war as seen by a sensitive and sympathetic observer with an insatiable curiosity. Mr. Walpole is saved from the characteristic faults of the journalist busily engaged in registering impressions, by his humanity, his zest for life, and his ardent sincerity. His book rings true. There is a strange undercurrent of intensity about it. The writing is vivid and fresh, and, although there are occasional tawdry passages and odd little gushes of sentiment and garrulity, nowhere is truth sacrificed to phrase-making or literary artifice.

There is a Russian proverb which might well have served as the keynote of Mr. Walpole's book: "The soul of thy brother is like a dark forest". It may seem absurd and exaggerated to claim for a writer who has spent only a few months in the country that he has interpreted for us the soul of Russia. But this, in effect, and in part at least, is what Mr. Hugh Walpole has done in this book, with the result that for the English reader it does succeed in giving a truer and more vivid impression of the Russia of to-day than is to be obtained from Dostoevsky and Turgenieff and other writers, who deal in nothing but snow, ikons, and the sublime simplicity of the Russian peasant. Under the stress of strong emotions a man reveals himself as he is in essence, and Mr. Walpole, with the Russian army in the dreadful days of the retreat in Galicia, had unique opportunities of observation. The war has not altered but has served to enhance the character of the Russian peoples. It has given to them a kind of splendour. Mr. Walpole was keenly conscious of the exultation, the ecstasy of the fighter, although he confesses himself unable to capture it or to understand its secret. "The scent of it, the full revelation of it, has not, until now, been my reward; I can only, as a spectator, watch that revelation as it comes afterwards to others more fortunate than I." But he is no shallow sentimentalist. He does not write for those who want a picture of romantic Russia, romantic war, or who expect to find Russian hearts exploding with love. God's smile on their simple faces, God's simple faith in their souls. In the words of one of his Russian characters, "We are neither savages nor confusing. We have simply a skin less than you. . . . We are a very young people, a real and genuine Democracy, and we care for quite simple things: women, food, sleep, money, quite simply and without restraint. We show our eagerness, our disgust, our disappointment, our amusement, simply as the mood moves us". But, writes Mr. Walpole, "however deeply a Russian admits an Englishman into friendship, he can, to the very last, puzzle, confuse, utterly surprise him. The Russian character seems superficially, with its lack of restraint, its idealism, its impracticability, its mysticism, its material simplicities, to be so readily grasped that the surprise that finally remains is the more dumbfounding. Perhaps, after all, it is the very closeness of our resemblance the one to the other that confuses us. It is, perhaps, that in the Russian's soul the East can never be reconciled to the West. It is, perhaps, that the Russian never reveals his secret ideal even to himself; far distant is it, then, from his friend. It may be that towards other men the Russian is indifferent, and towards women his relation is so completely sexual that his true character is hidden from her. Whatever it be, that surprise remains. For to those whom Russia and her people draw back again and again, however sternly they may resist, this sure truth stands: that here is a mystery, a mystery that may never be discovered." Mr. Walpole understands that the simple is the deep in relation to the mysteries of life. And he is alive to the mysticism that underlies the Russian character. To the

Russian life cannot be good. He ironically surveys those who think it can. He gives way to life, but when things are at their worst, then he is relieved and even happy. Death brings one at once close to the object of one's love. "Death seems to be happiness and the beginning of something new and unexpected. . . ." And the dead are all around the living—near, very near—so that we can feel their presence—nay, actually at times see and touch them. To the Russian this is all quite simple and plain—not a matter of dogma or religion or spiritualism, but a patent fact, which he regards as just natural.

There are many vivid impressions of actual warfare in the book, and there is one that is indelible. It is a picture of the officers "almost crying with despair" because there is no ammunition. They have been fighting "with one bullet as against ten". The men know it and go on with their cheerfulness, their obedience, their mild kindness, "go into that green hell to be butchered and come out of it again, if they are lucky, with their bodies mangled and twisted and horror in their eyes. . . ."

#### WORDSWORTH AND THE WORDSWORTHIANS.

"William Wordsworth: His Life, Works, and Influence."  
By George Maclean Harper. Murray. 2 Vols.  
24s. net.

MATTHEW ARNOLD'S gentle satire upon Wordsworthians and the disservice they have done their master has not deterred their successors. How should it deter them? For does not Matthew Arnold, in a postscript to his essay, announce himself as one among these very idolaters—as one who can read every line that Wordsworth has written with edification—even the "Address to Mr. Wilkinson's Spade"? There are really two people who write the celebrated essay to the Arnold edition. One of them is Arnold the critic, who knows quite well that, though Wordsworth is the third greatest poet in the English tongue, his "philosophy" is within the compass of the most ordinary bishop of his day, and that his "ethical system" simply is neither better nor worse than Mr. Tupper's. The other is Arnold, the devout worshipper, neighbour and friend of Wordsworth, who dotes even upon his encumbrances. The critic has the better of the devotee almost to the last of the essay, but he is finally knocked out of time in the postscript to which we have alluded.

There is a tussle similar to the tussle in Arnold's essay in Professor Harper's book. The biographer in Professor Harper is a devout Wordsworthian. He sets out formally to pry into the exact nature of Wordsworth's political and moral creed. He discusses weightily Wordsworth's prefaces, manifestos, ethical system and what not. He brings to this business great knowledge and some new material. His book is a mine for Wordsworthians. It is an important book—a book for all Wordsworthians to buy and keep and refer to continually. Nevertheless Professor Harper is not a thorough-going Wordsworthian. Like Arnold, he occasionally touches almost severely on that side of his poet which prompted the lady in Meredith to dismiss him as a "very superior gray beast". Professor Harper does seem to realise that Wordsworth's immortality has after all very little to do with his prefaces and politics and a very great deal to do with "The Celandine" and "Lucy Gray". His book is not therefore addressed simply to the Wordsworthians; but to all those who have received Wordsworth, quite apart from his system and doctrines, as possibly the greatest English poet after Shakespeare and Milton.

Arnold has disposed once for all of Wordsworth's ethical system and his pulpitering bent. These are not of the essence of Wordsworth's achievement. They are, in fact, a dead weight upon his fame, a cause of stumbling to many readers whose early path to some of the most perfect poems in the language was choked with long passages from "The

Excursion", wherein sentiments not an inch deeper than Pope are conveyed in language not a tenth as felicitous. There are passages illustrative of this side of Wordsworth's talent which deserved all that Byron, or Jeffrey himself, said of them. But, after Arnold's preface to the edition of 1879, there is really no reason why Wordsworth should continue to wear his worst millstones—his moral philosophy, ethics and so forth. Where there still remains some work to be done is in the rescue of Wordsworth's genius from being at all associated or confused with his position as the leader of a poetical revolution and of a rather childishly urged and quite untenable poetical doctrine. In a word, having cut away the ethical systems, we have now to cut away the critical prefaces, apologies and contentions with which Wordsworth is still much too closely identified by literary historians. Wordsworth's criticism was of no very great account; and when he merely wrote in order to apply and vindicate his criticism—when, as Byron spitefully phrases it, he

"Both by precept and example shows

That prose is poetry and poetry prose",

—we are simply made aware that Wordsworth owes everything to his genius and nothing at all to his method. Nay, more—when Wordsworth's method comes in at the door his genius almost invariably flies out at the window. When he really tries to be the practitioner in a new poetic diction, the leader of a new school of poets, and a conscious reformer, he invariably succeeds in not being Wordsworth at all.

Coleridge has quite clearly put the Wordsworthians right in regard to Wordsworth's critical theories; but Coleridge has been curiously neglected by the idolaters. Even Professor Harper does not do Coleridge half or even a quarter justice. The plain truth of the matter is that Coleridge was a very great critic and that Wordsworth was not a critic at all. Coleridge has absurdly been suspected of ill-feeling towards Wordsworth on account of the very searching analysis to which he subjected Wordsworth's critical ideas. Such suspicions are a strange reward for the man who first recognised Wordsworth's genius to the full, and most clearly saw wherein precisely it lay. Coleridge does not yield an inch to Matt. himself in praise and love of Wordsworth; but he was too good a critic not to be aware that Wordsworth's system was mostly nonsense. Coleridge once for all blows Wordsworth's theory of poetic diction sky high in his assertion: "Were there excluded from Mr. W.'s poetic compositions all that a literal adherence to the theory of his Preface would exclude, two-thirds at least of the marked beauties of his poetry must be erased".

Wordsworth's critical fallacies are not very far removed from those which govern the critics to-day who talk of realism as though it were a patent literary specific or short cut to the veracity of true genius. Take common speech out of the mouths of common men, and poetry ensues from the mere desire to be faithful. So runs this very common assumption when reduced to its simplest terms. Reality—what Arnold describes as "poetic truth"—is confused with realism, which is simply a method—a method which is neither more nor less likely to get at the truth of life than the classical method or the romantic. If we accepted Wordsworth's theory we should have to admit that his own "Michael" was more real than Milton's simply because he lived in a village whereas Milton's lived in Heaven. We should also have to admit that Shakespeare was less true to life than Ibsen because Shakespeare's people live sometimes in a magic island whereas Ibsen's people usually live in a modern drawing-room. We should also have to set some of Wordsworth's worst lines above most of his best.

Of course, what Wordsworth was really quarrelling with in his prefaces was not poetic diction at all, but the baser forms of rhetoric.

Reacting violently from the classical formality of some of his predecessors, he rushed to the opposite extreme, and actually, in his own words, took "as much pains to avoid Poetic Diction as is ordinarily taken to produce it". The retort of the great classicists

would be the retort which Coleridge himself used—namely, that whenever Wordsworth *has taken deliberate pains* to avoid Poetic Diction he has succeeded to the extent of avoiding poetry altogether. Only when he is quite unconscious of avoiding this or that theory of writing does he reveal to us his genius. Great poetry is not written by consciously avoiding this mode or that, or by deliberately seeking after this effect or that. It is written when, to use Wordsworth's happiest phrases, the poet is "looking steadily at the object" and is suffering from a "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings". This is no more than to say that a poet has to see and to feel before he can successfully poetise.

The Wordsworthians—not all of them such clear-sighted Wordsworthians as Matthew Arnold—would have had less power in the land were it not that unfortunately Wordsworth himself was one of the very worst of the tribe. He was far more thoroughly a Wordsworthian than Professor Harper, for example. Professor Harper can acutely discriminate between the worse and better poetry of Wordsworth, and can perceive his whole achievement in historical perspective. But Wordsworth was incapable of self-criticism. Like Goethe, he joined the congregation of his own expounders and devotees. He prided himself on some of his worst poetry, and was unaware of the genius that was in some of his best. He encouraged people to accept him as a philosopher, a moral teacher, and a critic of poetry—in which characters he was not really very remarkable; and thereby he obscured the true wonder of his poetry when "Nature herself seems . . . to take the pen out of his hand and to write for him with her own bare sheer penetrating power". He frightened away from his books many lovers of Nature by systematically finding sermons in stones, whereas these same lovers, better led, might have found for themselves the "Daisy" and the "Celandine". Surely it is time we allowed our young people to come straight at the true flower of Wordsworth's genius by clearing out of their way all that encumbers it.

#### EXCESS IN ARGUMENT.

"War and Christianity." By Vladimir Solovyof. With an Introduction by Stephen Graham. Constable. 4s. 6d. net.

VLADIMIR SOLOVYOF was the son of Vsevolod Solovyof, the popular Russian historian and novelist. Father and son both were friends and followers of Dostoevsky, leading spirits of the "Slavophil" party, and violently opposed to the penetration of Western ideas into their country. The younger man was poet and philosopher, and Mr. Stephen Graham introduces his book to us because, as he says, war is causing much heart-searching among Christian people. That in England it will allay many difficulties we frankly doubt. Its appeal is to a mentality other than our own, and its interest, which is considerable, lies in its revelation of a strange and alien way of thought. Just as there are very few of us who can accept the whole doctrine of Tolstoy, so also are there few likely to find in this book a satisfactory refutation of Tolstoy's teaching. To us it seems as though both parties try to prove too much. Here there is plenty of wit, but whilst some of the argument is decidedly ingenious, its general effect is merely ingenuous. The three "imaginary conversations" recorded by Solovyof do not bring us any great light.

Five persons are supposed to take part in the conversations. The characters are an old general, a politician, a prince who is one of Tolstoy's disciples, a lady, and a Mr. Z., described as of "doubtful age and social position". The two first named command our most immediate attention. They, at least, have something to say of the world as it is. The part of the lady is merely to indulge in a little mockery of masculine debate, and occasionally to call the speakers to order. The prince is a dreamer, perhaps attractive, perhaps dangerous. Of Mr. Z. we must write a few

words later. Solovyof's design is, of course, to show that war is necessary, holy, and not at all contrary to the Christian religion, and it is in a speech by the general that he makes his best point. "In the whole of my life", says the veteran of the Turkish war, "I only remember one good occasion which it would be impossible to call small . . . that good act of mine was a murder, and not by any means a small murder, for in a quarter of an hour I killed considerably more than a thousand men . . . with the aid of six pure, sinless, steel cannon, with the most virtuous and beneficial shrapnel." The general goes on to describe the circumstances. He tells how he had just passed through an Armenian village where Bashi-Bazouks had been behaving like Germans in Belgium. He speaks of his sacred fury, the pursuit, and then the destruction of the enemy. Had he spoken no more, he would have left any fair-minded hearer with the impression that the state of war which permitted the extermination of such vermin was altogether good.

The general, however, does not know when silence is wise, and begins to rattle his sabre at mention of every foreign land. England! Japan! Is there a single State, except Monaco, with which Russia has not accounts to regulate? When the politician rises to advocate peace, there is, strangely enough, the same mixture of sense and nonsense. Speaking in 1900 he is silly enough to declare that the era of European wars has passed, that Germany is going to civilise the Turks from altruistic motives, and that we can all be happy and contented with such a state of affairs. He merely utters the familiar rubbish which half Europe talked until last year. As for Mr. Z., who winds up the discussion with a parable in which Antichrist comes to earth as a bearer of universal peace between peoples and sects, we find him interesting though incomprehensible. His message, however, was not meant for us, and it would be affectation to pretend that it answers to our mental needs.

Summary of the whole debate is not difficult. The arguments have been such as one can hear almost any day among people with some education when they speak of matters which are of tremendous importance. Their logic deserts them. One side says that it is plainly advisable to kill wasps, which are insects that sting; and, therefore, that it is well to kill bees. The others reply that as it is plainly folly to destroy bees, although they are stinging insects, a clear case has been made out for not destroying wasps. Heated, both sides flatter themselves in the end that they have stuck to their opinions and achieved the rare merit of consistency.

#### WITH SCOTT AGAIN IN THE ANTARCTIC.

"With Scott: The Silver Lining." By Griffith Taylor. Illustrated. Smith, Elder. 18s. net.

[Published this week.]

MR. Griffith Taylor is a geologist, and in this book he writes partly about his work as a member of Captain Scott's last expedition and partly about the nerve-straining daily life that he and his friends managed with soldierly good will and cheeriness. What leader ever had better men than Scott's, and what men ever toiled under a better leader into dangers and discomforts? Not even the conditions of Ross Island fretted their tempers. Mr. Taylor describes a month in the old "Discovery" hut, a queer place indeed, hardly used at all by the 1902 expedition. When they saw it for the first time in January 1911 it was filled with snow and ice to within a foot or two of the ceiling. Then Dr. Atkinson and Crean set to work and cleared it completely of ice, and piled up boxes of captain biscuits to make a dining-room at the north end, where the blizzard winds were felt least keenly. Here, on 15 March, the Western party joined the *Dépôt* party, arriving at about 7 p.m. Mr. Taylor says:

"It was almost dark outside, and quite so inside. An acrid atmosphere of blubber, smoke and soot en-

veloped us as we occupied the rough planks grouped around the heart of the hut. Here was built up a primitive blubber stove, crowned by a chimney whose vagaries formed the chief topic of conversation among the inmates. Only one dim candle in a sooty lantern illuminated the scene. The windows were deeply frosted, and it was getting on towards winter now, so that only in the middle of the day could they give much light. There were two bedrooms: one on the west side, where six wet sleeping-bags, including the Captain's, lay almost as near together as are tinned sardines, and a central bedroom, with "walls" of biscuit tins on the north and west, and curtains of antique canvas on the south and east. Four men slept in this place, and lived somehow.

Yet ten men in a foul-smelling hut were not enough to test completely the diligence of sleep in Antarctica. On 23 March the Barrier party returned with its crew of six men, who at night lay around the stove. Sixteen human furnaces and the blubber stove made the temperature go up once to 46 deg. F. Water dripped from the ceiling, so empty tins tied up by string were put under the worst drippings, but not with much success. Men in their sleep rolled away from the water, "with the result that boundary commissions had often to decide on encroachments into foreign territory".

The fresh-air creed was as absent from the old hut as it is at the far end of a winding burrow where rabbits, their noses thrust into warm fur, sleep in the worst atmosphere that they can find. Neither animals nor birds confirm by their sleeping customs the creed of fresh air; and there seems to have been no ill-health in the old "Discovery" hut, though washing and a change of underclothes were imagined, like good ventilation and other comforts.

On the first evening Scott and his men, seated around the stove, ate thankfully from tin mugs a mess called seal hoosh, with captain's biscuit nearly ten years old. Next day they had "a grand feed of seal liver seasoned with peas"—peas left behind by the 1902 expedition; and on page 194 we read about the game of "shut-eye", played for a tin of marmalade. Mr. Taylor ladled out a spoonful, and Scott, with shut eyes, said to whom it was to be given. Everyone had two and a half spoonfuls, but Keohane—as a birthday honour—was told to scrape out the tin.

Other amusements were discussions—on Browning and Tennyson, on tone-values in art, on the planning of cities, and on other matters far off from their lot, for they had few books. Stanley Weyman was of the company—and very much at home—in a mutilated copy of "My Lady Rotha"; but think of the "Family Herald" and the "Girls' Own" among these Antarctic heroes! Perhaps they were enjoyed: for such a life, always face to face with aboriginal Nature, makes men simple, eager to get fun out of any trifle. Nicknames amused the explorers, and on several evenings they tried to guess whether Lord Kelvin's family name was Thomson or Thompson. "I won a stick of chocolate through chancing on the right spelling", says Mr. Taylor.

It is a fact that they never quarrelled in order to get the tonic of party warfare, and Scott himself wrote of it almost with "incredulous delight". Long evenings and difficult sleep, after hard work in the open air, must have been infinitely trying. Note, too, that there was no acting, no affectation, in the light-hearted cheerfulness, for the daily life and the diaries—the public and the private conduct—were informed by the same good will, the same unusual brotherliness.

From April to November 1911 the explorers were in winter quarters at their new and much better hut, but confined to Cape Evans, and often to the hut itself. This period is the subject of Mr. Taylor's fifth chapter, which should be read several times. There is a study of icebergs, their shapes and their sizes, with illustrations, that is most attractive; and there are scientific lectures given by "members of the community". Dr. Wilson speaks of Antarctic birds, and much is said about penguins, a bird that seems to have in it something almost human. It is classed in three main

groups, the Emperor penguin being the largest bird. One specimen weighed 92 lbs. The bones are so hard that they chip the best Sheffield blade. Another variety of penguin, the Adelie, is described by Mr. Taylor (page 62):

"He waddled towards us exactly like a tiny child learning to walk, who runs quickly to its mother, knowing that a topple at the end does not matter. Then he would stop and flap his wings (I was going to say arms), and bow and turn his head around in the most human and unbirdlike way. The most striking feature, I think, was the stiff little tail which he dragged on the ground, and which probably helped to support him. It is formed of a few stiff black feathers consisting of little but quill, and adds to the comicality of the bird. The colouring of pure white breast and black back reminds one of a stout little man in a swallow-tail coat and white shirt—both much too big for him".

Early in the winter quarters Dr. Atkinson began to test the general health and physique of the explorers, beginning on 24 April 1911. Besides ordinary measurements, breathing power was tested by the spirometer and the hand's grip by the dynamometer. On page 225 there is a table of figures recording the physical history of thirteen strong men. Lieut. Bowers, 5 ft. 4 in. high, is the shortest man, weighs 12 stone, has the biggest calf, 16½ in., a great chest, 40 in., but a low breathing register, 230 spirometer; Captain Scott, 5 ft. 9½ in., 11 stone 6½ lb., 320 dynamometer, 30½ in. waist, 14½ in. arm, 39½ in. chest, 294.5 spirometer, and 15½ calf. Curiously, a much stronger hand-clasp and much deeper breathing comes from a man with a much smaller arm and chest than Scott's—Mr. Charles Wright, 12½ arm, 345 dynamometer, 38 chest, 329 spirometer. It is a table worth close attention.

For the rest, nearly 200 illustrations, all entertaining, add very much to the historic value of this chatty, delightful book, and the maps could not well be bettered. Mr. Taylor ought to bring refreshment to a great many minds, in spite of the goose-brained "economy" that wants to end the war by starving both public and private libraries. Every boy in the realm would read himself into lasting friendship with Mr. Taylor if only he had a fair chance.

All books of permanent value that appear in the midst of this war ought to be reviewed periodically, then they would be passed on safely to a busy time freed from a burden of too many anxieties. It has been said that "the universal thrill awakened by Scott's example may have strung up the soul of the nation unawares for the great call so soon to be made upon it". We should like to believe so, but the pre-war days at home were poor in spirit. Scott and his men have not yet received their just measure of popular gratitude; but they ought to receive it now that Mr. Taylor adds other aspects to their drama and sends his readers to the "Last Expedition".

#### THE VOICE OF LITERATURE.

"A Book of Victorian Poetry and Prose." Compiled by Mrs. Hugh Walker. Cambridge University Press. 3s. net.

NOT an anthology; we cannot describe Lord de Tabley's "Jael" or "The Hanging of Major Monsoon" as flowers, though we may hesitate to term them weeds. Grouped under the five headings of "Systematic Thinkers", "Poetry", "Novelists", "History", and "Biography and Criticism" the contents of this book will no doubt resolve themselves into a more coherent organism to readers of the companion volume on "The Outlines of Victorian Literature", which they are designed to illustrate. Otherwise their miscellaneous character is rather startling. But if we once admit that the first duty of a miscellany is to be miscellaneous we may glide, without too much of a bump, from Maine on political parties to Miller on the old red sandstone, from the "Battle Song" of the Corn Law rhymers to

the sentimentalities of Thomas Hood. What these authors would have said or thought of the company with which they here find themselves in close proximity is another matter. Selection, they might perhaps argue, and inclusion in a miscellany are among the penalties of eminence. Let it go at that.

How individual readers will be affected by this book is a matter of temperament. Unrepentant Victorians will like it best. To them it will be a book to dream over, as much from what it omits as from what it contains. A single page out of "Heroes and Hero Worship" will bring back to them the delight and wonder with which they first read through that masterpiece. Jane Welsh Carlyle on "Bread Making" will set them musing on the ill-starred marriage of a man and woman of genius. "Strangers Yet" will make them reflect on the curious tradition of their boyhood that Richard Monckton Milnes was a poet. They will find the Victorian novelists and Robert Browning as good as ever; will look in vain for anything from the pen of Alfred Domett, who was "Waring", and will triumphantly affirm Tennyson's claim to the prophetic gift on happening upon the lines about "banded unions".

"Should banded unions persecute  
Opinion, and induce a time  
When single thought is civil crime,  
And individual freedom mute—"

Of course, say the unrepentant, he foresaw the coming tyranny of the trades unions! And assuredly Tennyson here foreshadows what they have sought to do—particularly since the passing of the Trades Disputes Act—yet happily have not wholly succeeded in doing. Be that as it may, the Victorian will find himself quite at home among these miscellaneous pages.

But the younger generation, who devour the works of Messrs. H. G. Wells and Arnold Bennett, to whom Mr. Chesterton is the last word in what is humorous? Well, we do not say that they will find Mrs. Walker's book particularly attractive, yet we would commend it to their notice as calculated to enlarge their minds. We shall not censure them if they contend that life is too short and crowded to explore the poetical works of Sheridan Knowles, Aubrey De Vere, Sir Henry Taylor, and Alexander Smith, for example, and that the brief extracts from these authors scarcely furnish any criterion of their powers; but we think that the passages cited from writers of established repute, whose works are yet in danger of neglect, may tempt them to many pleasant voyages of discovery. It is sufficient, perhaps, to mention the names of Froude and Kinglake, of Landor and De Quincey. And yet the harsh though glorious truth is borne in upon us that the bulk of those for whose edification a book of this sort is intended are engaged upon sterner objects than the formation of a literary taste. Amid the clash of arms the voice of Literature is heard but intermittently. Let us console ourselves with the belief that a love of English letters, whether Victorian or other, has been among the influences which have gone to form the minds and characters of many of those now fighting for the liberties and the existence of our country.

#### LATEST BOOKS.

"Finland and the Finns." By Arthur Reade. London. Methuen. 10s. 6d.

The Finns must be growing a little weary of being "written up", especially since cultured, progressive editors took them in charge. The views of a resident in a strange land are naturally preferable to the second-hand vapourings of globe-trotters, but, even so, is there much more to say of Finland?

If there is Mr. Reade certainly misses nothing, yet sometimes his faint praise damns very sorely, nor will his well-meaning excuses of the confession and avoidance order be very pleasant reading for some of his Finnish friends. We admire him for his courage, the more so if he is still a resident. The travelled Finn is refreshingly frank about his countrymen—and women;

admits their narrow particularism, and shakes his head over the inordinate value set on words. Everybody reads, he says, but few think. Of such is this kingdom of democracy. Upon this sea of talk a few years back fell with a crash the Russian machine. Finland, a nation, was to become a Finnish province of the Empire. Yet out of evil good is coming. The talk is less loud. Good Finns are doing things; working out land problems in a practical way—for little else than the land and what it grows matters in Finland—teaching the people to plough, to sow and to reap in new ways, how to buy and how to sell; together, how to drag the most out of a poor soil that is frost bound more than half the year. Intellectually Finland is very new, very raw, and rather self-conscious. Sweden was, and still is, the godmother, and only the most inveterate particularist would dream of claiming national schools in art or literature. For centuries, unaided, the Finns have fought Nature in all her cruel northern intensity. So far they have just won, but by hard toil only. The times have altered. They no longer wish to rejoin Sweden and they cannot stand alone. Will they not serve Finland and the world better by making their country a strong haven for good in a regenerated Russia?

"German Conspiracies in America." W. H. Skaggs. T. Fisher Unwin. 5s. net.

Whatever might have been the case a year ago, nowadays there are very few people in Europe who profess even a moderate interest in German conspiracies in America. And if an Englishman may be allowed to judge from the progress of events, there are not many people in the United States who care either. This book is said to have been written "from an American point of view by an American", and it is interesting to note that Mr. Skaggs considers that "the people of the United States ought to realise that they have become the object of almost universal dislike". "We have done nothing," he continues, "to make a friend of one of the ten belligerent nations. Our policy of watchful waiting and thinking of America first has aroused the hatred of some and the contempt of others."

"A Dictionary of Universal Biography." By Albert M. Hyamson. Routledge. 25s. net.

Is pemmican of pemmican biographically. It should be useful for bare reference, for it contains a vast number of names, though each entry is, admittedly, very meagre of information.

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### THE SCOTTISH AMICABLE LIFE ASSURANCE SOCIETY.

THE 90th Annual General Meeting was held in Glasgow on Thursday last, Robert Blyth, Esq. (Chairman of the Board of Directors), presiding. The Chairman, in moving the adoption of the Report, after referring to the details of the year's transactions, said it was a matter for surprise and congratulation how little the war had affected the Society's normal progression. Its influence on the quinquennial investigation was very marked, however, in the amount of depreciation which it had caused in the value of the securities. The sum of £35,000 had been written off in connection with the sale of assets of about £1,000,000 invested in America and other foreign countries. The proceeds had been invested to secure a better return at home, and the sale had enabled the Society to give effective support to the Government loans for financing the war. The Society had now £1,300,000 so invested. In addition to the comparatively small loss on realisation they had written off a very large sum on revaluation of the assets, and the total provision for the quinquennial period was £700,000. No use had been made of nominal or minimum prices in the valuation. When no genuine market existed the values of perpetual stocks were written down in relation to the fall in similar securities with an unfettered market, and terminable securities had been revalued on an increased basis of yield to correspond with the rise in interest rates. This method might tend to exaggerate the general fall, because securities unprotected by minimum prices had to bear the brunt of forced sales. If so, they were on the safe side, and he had no hesitation in saying the figures in the balance sheet could be accepted as a conservative representation of the value of the assets at the end of the year. Suggestions had been made from time to time that it was unnecessary to write down terminable securities, or advocating the use of values based on an average of years. The Assurance Companies Act seemed to preclude the use of any such expedients; but whether this was too strict an interpretation of the statutory requirements or not, the Directors had felt it to be essential in a time like the present that the value of the assets should not be overstated. The values had, therefore, been rigidly written down, including the redeemable stocks.

The next point to be determined was the basis to be adopted in valuing the liabilities. In this connection it was important to bear in mind that depreciation, not due to loss of income or to any impairment of security, is not necessarily detrimental in the circumstances of a Life Office. The proceeds of maturing investments and fresh funds can be employed at more remunerative rates, and it is possible so to arrange a distribution of risks and assets as to neutralise the effect of depreciation. It was, however, clearly necessary to value the risks as well as the assets before any reliable conclusion could be arrived at. It was interesting to remember that twenty years ago the problem giving anxiety was the appreciation of security values and the reduced earning power of the funds. The Society had dealt with the position then by placing the reserves against liabilities on a basis of unexampled strength. The particular danger against which these reserves were made had not materialised, but the reverse of what was then feared had happened. The new situation had been met by a rigid writing down of the assets, and for this purpose a part of the reserves previously held against liabilities had been released. The valuation of liabilities had been maintained on a very stringent basis. A mortality table omitting the benefit of light mortality during the first five years of assurance had been used. The net premiums left a margin of nearly 20 per cent. to meet expenses and to contribute to profits, and it was assumed that the funds will earn 3 per cent. interest. The most exacting critic must be satisfied with the tests applied to the valuation of the assets and liabilities. These tests had been determined upon after due consideration of the financial position arising from the war. Before actually dealing with the surplus disclosed the Directors had further considered the uncertainties of the financial outlook and the largely increased taxation that must be borne. On the other hand, a substantial reserve for the future had been created by writing down the terminable securities. A somewhat higher rate of interest might be looked for, and the margins reserved had proved to be productive of surplus much in excess of the amount required to pay the bonus. In these circumstances the Directors had not felt justified in withholding the customary bonus, which had been declared at the compound rate of 35s. per cent. per annum.

It was fortunate that the depreciation due to the war had followed upon a long period of years during which the problem had called for study. This had resulted in an increased new business and direction of investment to short-dated securities. But the main reason why the present position was so easily dealt with was to be found in the fact that the Society's resources had never been strained to pay a sensational rate of bonus. Declarations had always been well within the limits of the profit-earning capacity.

It was hoped that members would assist in influencing new business at a time when, with nearly two-thirds of the pre-war staff on active service, the Society was without agency organisation. War and life assurance were diametrically opposed in their results. War dissipated the resources accumulated through years of patient labour—life assurance fostered the accumulation of capital. There was no better way for the individual to combat the financial effect of the war than by means of a life policy. The Report was unanimously adopted.

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#### NOTICE TO SHAREHOLDERS.

#### SEVENTH ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING.

NOTICE is hereby given that the SEVENTH ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING of Shareholders in the above Company will be held in the Board Room, Second Floor, "The Corner House," Johannesburg, on Friday, the 26th day of May, 1916, at 10.30 o'clock in the forenoon, for the following business:—

1. To receive the Reports of the Directors and Auditors, and to consider the Balance Sheet for the year ended 31st December, 1915.

2. To confirm the appointment of Mr. H. S. Johnson Hall as a Director in the place of Mr. W. L. Honnold, resigned.

To elect two Directors in the place of Mr. H. S. Johnson Hall and Mr. H. Newhouse, who retire by rotation in terms of the Articles of Association, but are eligible and offer themselves for re-election.

3. To fix the remuneration for the past audit, and to appoint Auditors for the ensuing year.

4. To transact such other business as may be transacted at an Ordinary General Meeting.

The London Transfer Registers of the Company will be closed from the 25th April to the 29th April, 1916, and the Head Office Transfer Registers from the 22nd May to the 9th June, 1916, all days inclusive.

By Order of the Board,

J. H. JEFFERYS,  
Secretary to the London Committee.

LONDON TRANSFER OFFICE:

5, London Wall Buildings,  
Finsbury Circus, E.C.

25th March, 1916.

### BRAKPAN MINES, LTD.

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#### NOTICE TO SHAREHOLDERS.

#### THIRTEENTH ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING.

NOTICE is hereby given that the THIRTEENTH ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING of Shareholders in the above Company will be held in the Board Room, Second Floor, "The Corner House," Johannesburg, on Friday, the 26th day of May, 1916, at 11 o'clock in the forenoon, for the following business:—

1. To receive the Reports of the Directors and Auditors, and to consider the Balance Sheet and Revenue and Expenditure Account for the year ended the 31st December, 1915.

2. To confirm the appointment of Mr. W. S. Saunders as a Director in the place of Mr. W. L. Honnold, resigned.

To elect two Directors in the place of Messrs. A. S. Pearce and W. S. Saunders, who retire by rotation in terms of the Articles of Association, but are eligible and offer themselves for re-election.

3. To fix the remuneration for the past audit, and to appoint Auditors for the ensuing year.

4. To transact such other business as may be transacted at an Ordinary General Meeting.

The London Transfer Registers of the Company will be closed from the 25th April to the 29th April, 1916, and the Head Office Transfer Registers from the 22nd May to the 9th June, 1916, all days inclusive.

Holders of Share Warrants to Bearer wishing to be represented at the Meeting must deposit their Share Warrants, or may, at their option, produce same at the places and within the times following:—

(a) At the Head Office of the Company, in Johannesburg, at least 24 hours before the time appointed for the holding of the Meeting.

(b) At the London Office of the Company, 5, London Wall Buildings, E.C., at least 30 days before the date appointed for the holding of the Meeting.

(c) At the Office of the Crédit Mobilier Français, 30 and 32, rue Taibout, Paris, at least 30 days before the date appointed for the holding of the Meeting.

Upon such production or deposit, Certificates with Proxy Forms will be issued, under which such Share-Warrant Holders may attend the Meeting either in person or by proxy.

By Order of the Board,

J. H. JEFFERYS,  
Secretary to the London Committee.

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25th March, 1916.